

Iryani holds talks in Damascus

DAMASCUS (Agencies) — Yemeni Foreign Minister Abdul Karim Al Iryani, on a post-Gulf war tour aimed at healing rifts in the Arab World, held talks with his Syrian counterpart, Farouq Al Sharaa, on Tuesday. Iryani, visiting Damascus for the first time since the end of the Gulf crisis, told reporters on arrival he was carrying a message to Syrian President Hafez Al Assad from Yemen's president, Ali Abdullah Saleh. Thousands of Syrian troops took part in a multinational force which drove Iraqi occupation forces from Kuwait. Yemen adopted a sympathetic stand towards Iraq. Iryani arrived from Amman. He said in Amman he would visit Lebanon and Egypt in an effort "to return Arab unity to what it used to be before it was shattered by the war." In Amman, Iryani met His Majesty King Hussein and handed him a message from President Saleh.



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Germany complains to Kuwait over treatment of Palestinians

BONN, Germany (AP) — Germany complained strongly to Kuwait Tuesday over persecution of Palestinians in Kuwait in the aftermath of the Gulf war. The foreign ministry said Kuwaiti Ambassador Khalid Al Bahdin was summoned to a meeting with the head of ministry's political department, Reinhard Schlagentweit, who expressed Germany's "serious misgivings" over the "persecution, torture and killing of Palestinians in Kuwait." A ministry statement also said the German official expressed interest in the reconvening of the Kuwaiti parliament and holding free elections in the country. Foreign Minister Hans Dietrich Genscher had brought up the topic of human rights violations in Kuwait during a meeting of European foreign ministers in Luxembourg earlier this week, the statement said.

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J.T. observes Labour Day

The Jordan Times will observe Labour Day holiday and will not appear Thursday, May 2. The next issue of the Jordan Times will appear on Saturday May 4. We wish our readers and advertisers a happy holiday.

Would-be conscripts given more time

AMMAN (Petra) — The Cabinet Tuesday decided to extend the deadline for payment of conscription exemption fees for expatriates another four months until Aug. 31 of this year. The Cabinet, chaired by Prime Minister Mudar Badran, took into consideration the special circumstances of expatriates, especially those who returned from Kuwait, and decided to extend the deadline for the last time.

Reforms soon — King Fahd

NICOSIA (R) — King Fahd of Saudi Arabia has said the final revision of regulations for proposed conscription council had been completed. "We have almost completed the final revision of regulations, which are based on Islam," the official Saudi press agency on Monday night quoted King Fahd as saying. "The Shoura council will be established and will carry out its responsibility to support the country and the government," King Fahd said.

Bangladesh death toll touches 1,200

DHAKA (R) — The worst cyclone to hit Bangladesh in the past two decades has killed at least 1,200 people, officials and state-run television said Tuesday. They said the death toll in the cyclone, which struck on Monday night, could rise further when reports from remote islands were available. State-run radio said the cyclone, with winds stronger than the one that killed 100,000 people in 1970, had affected seven million people (see earlier story on page 8).

2 Injured in Tunis clashes

TUNIS (R) — Two students were injured in clashes with police at the Tunis University faculty of letters and humanities, newspapers said Tuesday. Students throwing stones attacked police who entered the faculty on Monday to remove posters put up by Muslim fundamentalist students, the newspaper said. The government newspaper La Presse said the fundamentalist students then ransacked lecturers' rooms, attacked a watchman and broke the arm of an anti-fundamentalist student.

Turkey boosts security

ANKARA (R) — Turkey, fearing terrorist attacks, is stepping up security in big cities to enforce a ban on open air May Day rallies. "We have tip offs that terrorist groups might carry out actions on May 1," Mehmet Agar, Istanbul's security chief, told Reuters. "We have cancelled all security staff leave and all staff will be on duty. Open air and outdoor meetings and marches will not be allowed, and in case they occur security forces will immediately step in," he said.

Algeria legalises 2 parties

ALGIERS (R) — Algeria has legalised the Arab World's first Green Party and the moderate fundamentalist Hamas Movement, bringing to 44 the number of parties who will contest Algeria's first multi-party elections on June 27. The Algerian news agency APS announced their legalisation on Monday to contest polls ending 27 years of one-party rule. The Ecologies ET Libertés (Ecology and Freedom) Party said in its manifesto it aimed to make people live in harmony with nature and improve their quality of life.

Allies expand presence Kurdish refugees stream into north security zone

ZAKHO, Iraq (Agencies) — Kurdish refugees, trapped for a month in squalid mountain retreats after fleeing their homes in the aftermath of the rebellion in northern Iraq, streamed home on Tuesday to a security zone carved out in northern Iraq by allied Western troops.

Men, women and children walked, piled onto tractors, jumped into trucks and hitched rides aboard U.S. helicopters to return to Iraq after Peshmerga guerrillas tore down roadblocks and let the refugees pass.

The United Nations ran up its flag across from the first allied camp near the town of Zakho, 10 kilometres from the border, establishing a regular presence alongside and separate from that of the allied troops.

"We are here to start the process for a major humanitarian activity in this area," Staffan de Mistura, leading the U.N. team, said. "We will bring people, staff, equipment and food."

U.S. Major Carl Fisher, who runs the Zakho refugee camp for the allied troops, said the camp had taken in 114 Kurdish families in the past 24 hours — its first resident families.

"Marine scouts have reported people moving on foot and in cars along the Iraqi-Turkish border this morning, and we are bracing for a big barrage in the next few days," he added.

An additional 807 young Kurdish men, flown in over the weekend by U.S. helicopters from refugee camps in Turkey, were hard at work preparing the

Zakho camp for the anticipated flood.

"We can handle 6,000 now and we're still building tents," Fisher said.

In another development, U.S. and allied forces expanded their military presence in northern Iraq on Tuesday and bused Iraqi refugees down from the snow-capped mountains to a "safe haven" transit camp.

British Chinook helicopters disgorged companies of royal marines on hilltops near this village (Kani Masi) about 90 kilometres east of the northern Iraqi town of Zakho, while Dutch and U.S. troops secured bridges and mountain tracks.

The aim, according to British military spokesman Major Bob Fanshaw, was to link up with Kurdish guerrillas, or Peshmerga, and help refugees find their way down from rugged peaks along the Turkish border through guer-

rilla lines to the allied safe haven in northern Iraq.

The second phase, expected on Wednesday, involves allied troops staking out a perimeter around the refugee sanctuary, along the valley floor east of Zakho.

In Damascus, Iraqi Shiite rebels said on Tuesday they attacked an intelligence centre in Baghdad on Monday night, killing an officer and nine others.

Ayatollah Taqi Al Mudarresi, mentor of several Shiite opposition groups including the Islamic Action Organisation, said attacks against forces loyal to Iraqi President Saddam Hussein were continuing in several cities in southern Iraq.

Kurdish leaders are in Baghdad negotiating autonomy with the government, but the Shiites say they will fight on.

(Continued on page 4)

Saddam vows to rebuild Iraq

BAGHDAD (Agencies) — President Saddam Hussein vowed on Tuesday to rebuild Iraq "10 times better" after the destruction of the Gulf war. Looking relaxed and dressed in the uniform of field marshal, Saddam told officials of the ruling Baath Party in the town of Ar Ramadai, west of Baghdad, that the allies had dropped 87,000 tonnes of explosives on Iraq during 111,000 sorties. "God willing, we will rebuild Baghdad to be 10 times better than it was before being attacked by the allies," he said in a speech reported by the local news media. President Saddam whose comments also covered reconstruction throughout Iraq, said that as a young exile in Syria and Egypt he dreamed of making Baghdad a modern city to match Damascus and Cairo. This he had done, but many of achievements were destroyed during the Gulf war, he said.

Lebanese Forces agree to disarm, Hizbollah resists

BEIRUT (Agencies) — Lebanon's most powerful militia, the Christian Lebanese Forces (LF) agreed to surrender its tanks and other arms from Tuesday, signalling a major breakthrough for a government plan to rid Lebanon of private armies.

But the pro-Iranian Hizbollah said while it would not resist the deployment of the Lebanese army in areas it controls, it would not lay down its arms until Israel withdraws from south Lebanon.

Lebanon's second strongest militia, the Syrian-backed Druze Progressive Socialist Party (PSP), started giving up its arms at the weekend and other militias have already fallen into line with the plan to rid Lebanon of the militias that tore it apart in 15 years of civil war.

The Shiite Muslim group, the Palestine Liberation Organisation, a contingent of Iran's Revolutionary Guards and a pro-Israeli militia in the occupied strip in south Lebanon have emerged as the main challenge to an April 30 government deadline

for all militias to surrender their heavy weapons.

The LF led by Samir Geagea said it agreed to disarm after receiving assurances that state jobs would be found for its 10,000 men.

"For the first time we are facing a real opportunity of peace," said Roger Dib, an LF adviser who became minister of state in a government formed last December to reunite the country.

Government sources said the LF agreed to start on Tuesday returning to the regular army an arsenal which included 48 tanks, 36 artillery pieces, 47 armoured cars, 370 vehicles, seven helicopter gunships and seven naval boats. The weapons were seized during the civil war.

President Elias Hrawi's Syrian-backed government had set Tuesday as the deadline for all private armies to give up their guns after driving the militias out of Beirut and its suburbs late last year in the first phase of a Lebanese peace plan.

The Hrawi government is

acting under an internationally backed peace pact for Lebanon agreed in the Saudi city of Taif in 1989. The accord gave Lebanon's Muslim-majority more say in the Christian-dominated country to remove a major grievance at the root of the civil war.

Militias with Syrian connections, including the PSP, the Arab Democratic Party, Al Marada militia and Al Wa'ad Party, started giving back their arms last week.

The Shiite Muslim Amal militia, also backed by Syria, said on Friday it was disbanding its military structure. The pro-Iranian Hizbollah denies having heavy and medium guns.

"The military conflict is over," said Druze leader Walid Jumblatt.

"For the first time (in 16 years) we have a real chance for a real peace," said minister without portfolio Roger Dib, who represents the Lebanese Forces in a 30-man half-Muslim, half-

(Continued on page 5)

Baker's mission yielded slim results — White House

WASHINGTON (AP) — The White House said Monday that Secretary of State James A. Baker's Middle East peace missions have so far yielded "slim" results.

"Obviously that's been somewhat disappointing," White House spokesman Martin Fitzwater said.

But he said the Bush administration will continue to keep pressing the Arabs and Israelis to solve their long-standing differences.

Fitzwater refused to comment on the Israeli government's retreat from concessions that Foreign Minister David Levy made last week when Baker was in Jerusalem trying to arrange a regional peace conference.

Levy on Friday indicated that Israel would consider the possibility that a regional peace conference might be reconvened to monitor progress in Arab-Israeli

talks.

But Prime Minister Yitzhak Shamir and other Israeli officials publicly disavowed Levy's position after a cabinet meeting on Sunday and restated Israel's insistence that it will agree only to a one-time regional meeting and then would insist on direct talks with the Arab countries.

Baker was in Houston Monday attending the funeral of his mother. He curtailed his Middle East trip after learning in Jerusalem Friday of her death.

Baker was returning to Washington after the funeral, but Fitzwater said he did not know when he would brief the president on his mission, his third trip to the Middle East in the past seven weeks.

"We don't know what his plans are for the future, what his next trips are. But certainly we continue to hope for peace, to hope

that some progress can be made," said Fitzwater.

Fitzwater said there was no news to report on the Americans and other Westerners held hostage in Lebanon. Baker raised their plight in his travels.

"I cannot honestly report any change or any new hope. The best overall hope we have is simply that conditions in the Middle East are changing," he said.

He cited the U.S. refugee relief flight into Iran over the weekend as one "small indication" of progress in the area.

The U.S. administration also distanced itself from a leading Republican senator's veiled threat to use aid as a lever to make Israel and the Arabs more flexible.

"Our emphasis is on the positive side...and we don't think it's appropriate to talk about what

(Continued on page 5)

Allegations against Jordan baseless — Cheney

By a Jordan Times reporter with reports

MEDIA reports of Iraq trying to rebuild its army by smuggling arms from Asian countries through Jordan could not be substantiated following efforts by the U.S. Defence Department to track possible violations, U.S. Secretary of Defence Dick Cheney told a seminar at the Washington Institute for Near East Policies Monday.

"I haven't seen any evidence of that yet," Mr. Cheney said. He added that Jordan's geographical location could be used as a route for smuggling items needed by the Iraqis.

Richard Boucher, deputy spokesman at the State Department also said that there was no evidence to substantiate reports of an Iraqi network in Jordan to buy spareparts and ammunition for the Iraqi army.

"Generally we think we have been vigilant in pursuing any leads or information that Iraq may be trying to break the arms embargo," Mr. Boucher said.

"Frankly, we don't have any evidence of that," he added.

Mr. Cheney said that "Jordan is one route through which goods could pass but at this point," he saw no "evidence that would leave me to have any concern that he (Iraqi President Saddam Hussein) is about to be able to rebuild his military machine anytime in the near future."

An official Jordanian spokesman Monday denied a report published in the London Observer April 28 alleging Jordan was violating Security Council resolutions on Iraq.

The spokesman said that there is no truth whatsoever to the report that Iraq has set up a purchasing operation in Jordan to buy arms and advanced technology from some Asian countries.

Mr. Cheney pointed out that the rebuilding of the heavily damaged infrastructure of Iraq is going to "cost a great deal of money...so the notion that he is going to be able to divert significant assets to restoring his military...I think is preposterous at best."

"There are simply not enough resources to go around in Iraq at today's world prices (of oil), and without our approval (he will not) be able to do much in that regard," Mr. Cheney added.

Algeria, China deny working on nuclear weapons development

ALGIERS, Algeria (AP) — Algeria and China denied Tuesday they were cooperating to develop nuclear weapons and provided details of a secret plant under construction in this North African country.

The official APS news agency said the nuclear reactor China is helping Algeria build will be used solely for peaceful purposes.

It will be open to inspection by the International Atomic Energy Agency when completed in two years, APS said.

A spokesman for China's foreign ministry, quoted by the official Hsinhua news agency in Beijing, said China does not encourage nuclear proliferation.

He said a 1983 agreement between the two countries included a heavy water reactor, but it was "totally groundless" to claim that the small reactor could produce nuclear weapons.

U.S. and British press reports have alleged that China is helping

Sudan frees Mahdi, declares amnesty

KHARTOUM (R) — Sudanese President Omar Hassan Ali Bashir announced on Tuesday he was freeing former Prime Minister Sadeq Al Mahdi and Communist leader Mohammad Ali Nogh — the last of the Sudanese political party chiefs rounded up when he seized power in 1989.

Speaking to a national conference called to decide the country's political future, Bashir also offered amnesty to rebels.

Mahdi, 56, was premier during a 1986-89 interlude of elected government. He is a hereditary leader of the Ansar Movement — the followers of his great-grandfather, the Imam Mahdi who fought Britain, Egypt and Turkey in the 1880s and 90s.

Media reports outside Sudan say the Oxford-educated Mahdi suffers from an unspecified eye ailment.

Bashir jailed scores of politicians, trade unionists and human rights activists after taking power. He told the conference on Monday he was freeing all remaining political prisoners, who numbered about 100 according to a recent official estimate. He gave some of the prominent names on Tuesday in remarks reported by the official news agency SUNA.

The amnesty appeared to cover



Sadeq Al Mahdi

Nogh, the veteran Communist leader whose party took part in Mahdi's last, broad-based government, spent 16 years in hiding during the military dictatorship of Jaafar Numeiri. He reappeared in public when Numeiri was ousted in 1985.

SUNA said Bashir announced an amnesty open for a month to "those who carried arms against the revolution" and for opposition politicians abroad.

The amnesty appeared to cover

the estimated 50,000 rebels of the Sudan People's Liberation Army (SPLA) which has fought successive Khartoum governments in the south since 1983.

Bashir did not mention two of Mahdi's close aides, former Finance Minister Bashir Ali and Energy Minister Bakri Adeel, who are still in detention. The two are stalwarts of Mahdi's Umma Party, Sudan's biggest.

Since taking power, Bashir has suspended the constitution, dissolved parliament, political parties and trade unions, and imposed an indefinite state of emergency.

Jalal Ali Lutfi, the head of the judiciary, was quoted on Tuesday by the London-based Arabic daily Asharq Al Awsat as saying there were about 100 political prisoners in Sudan.

Foreign human rights groups say conditions in some of Sudan's jails, particularly one in Darfur state in the West, are so poor that some detainees have contracted fatal diseases.

Asharq Al Awsat also reported that Mahdi's wife Sara, who held senior posts in the Umma-Party, had heart and blood pressure problems and was seeking permission from the ruling junta to receive treatment abroad.

Israelis gear up for Falasha 'influx'

Bethlehem mayor condemns killing of French tourist

BETHLEHEM, occupied West Bank (Agencies) — A 63-year-old French woman was stabbed to death in a Bethlehem restaurant Tuesday.

The motive for the attack was not clear and the army said the killer had not been caught. The French consulate identified the woman only as a 63-year-old French citizen.

"She came with French nuns. This is a religious group, they are pilgrims," veteran Bethlehem Mayor Elias Freij told Reuters, calling the attack "barbaric."

"The right of worship in Bethlehem must be guaranteed by Arabs and I want all Arabs to condemn this act. She purposely came to 'pray in Bethlehem,'" he said.

According to an army spokesman the woman arrived at the restaurant with other French tourists and went to the bathroom. She was found downstairs in a pool of blood.

The army said she had been stabbed twice and hospital sources said she had been struck through the heart.

"There was no reason to attack her whatsoever," said an army spokesman. He said her belongings had not been touched. "We believe the murder was done by a fanatic Islamic."

Soldiers clamped a curfew on the Bethlehem area, just south of Jerusalem, and troops rounded up dozens of suspects.

She was the first tourist killed in the West Bank since a Palestinian revolt against Israeli rule erupted 40 months ago.

Palestinians have killed four tourists in nationalist attacks inside Israel during the revolt.

The uprising has deterred all but a handful of tourists from visiting Bethlehem. The woman died in a restaurant beside the

Church of the Nativity, accepted by Christians as the site of Jesus's birth.

"She came to pray in the church where Jesus Christ was born so I call on all people in the Palestinian camp to denounce this criminal attack... it is a very shocking crime," Freij said.

Freij called the stabbing a "serious blow" for a tourist centre already reeling from the drop in visitors because of the Gulf war and increasing violence in the Palestinian revolt.

In an interview last week at his office overlooking the Manger Square, Freij reported that local unemployment, unknown four years ago, was now at least 70 per cent.

Freij said of some 84 restaurants that existed then, only four are still open. He said only one of six hotels still worked, and that only because it is family run.

At least 1,120 Palestinians have been killed during the uprising. Earlier on Tuesday, an Arab stabbed and lightly wounded an Israeli farmer near Tel Aviv. Police arrested a suspect from the occupied Gaza Strip who they said confessed.

Police quoted the 28-year-old suspect saying he was sent by a

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Britain holds landmark talks on N. Ireland

BELFAST (R) — Britain started landmark talks on Northern Ireland on Tuesday, getting Roman Catholic and Protestant leaders together in an attempt to bring peace to the strife-torn province.

The Belfast talks, scheduled to last 10 weeks, could be a turning point for Northern Ireland after two decades of sectarian and political conflict in which 3,000 people have died.

Northern Ireland Minister Peter Brooke has already scored a remarkable achievement by persuading Protestants and Catholics to sit round the same table to talk about the future of the Protestant-majority province.

The Irish Times said the two

sides appeared to have "mutually irreconcilable agendas." But it said participants "know most assuredly that if they fail this time, it will be many a long day before they get another chance."

Brooke's initiative differs from previous efforts to end the Irish problem in that he has no blueprint for a solution but plans to let each submit proposals.

Round the table are representatives of the government of the Irish Republic, unionist leaders representing Northern Ireland's Protestant majority, the moderate Nationalist Social Democratic and Labour Party, and the middle-of-the-road Alliance Party.

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Save the Children Project

Infant milk for Iraq stranded since August

By Debbie Lovatt
Special to the Jordan Times

AMMAN — Two shipments of infant formula, purchased and paid for by the State Company for Foodstuff Trading (Canfood), Baghdad, before the U.N. imposed an embargo on Iraq in August, have been bobbing around the Mediterranean or temporarily housed at ports in Europe unable to reach their destination over the past nine months.

In an effort to get the milk powder sent to Iraq Falah Wajdi, the representative of the Red Cross Society in Germany, has been in touch with the Red Cross, the World Health Organisation (WHO), the United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF), and the International Physicians for the Prevention of Nuclear War (IPPNW).

Mr. Wajdi points out that "infant milk formula is not in the embargo. The shipping companies argue that they cannot deliver this supply through the naval blockade around the port of Aqaba without a certificate from an international humanitarian organisation or the U.N. The two consignments are already paid for by the Iraqi company for more than a year and are lying in different ports in Europe. They can not be delivered because of the embargo and the expiry date of the product will end in a few months."

One consignment, comprising 554 tonnes of infant formula from the Nestle company in Switzerland, had been stored in Varna (Bulgaria) and Gdynia (Poland) since August, and is now thought to be in Athens.

This consignment is half made up of a product called

Pelargon, which is medicated and prevents diarrhoea.

Diarrhoea is the main health problem currently affecting young children in Iraq. The other consignment of 1,003 tonnes of instant full cream milk powder and 823 tonnes of infant formula, including 366 tonnes of Pelargon are blocked at Mersin, Turkey.

According to a vice president of the Nestle world trade organisation, "these goods are impounded by Interbank Istanbul. A solution has to be found to get these goods released along legal lines."

Turkey has until now been adhering to the embargo. In an announcement on Monday, however, it said it was lifting restrictions on the export of food to Iraq with immediate effect following Baghdad's acceptance last month of a U.N. Security Council ceasefire.

A fax sent to Mr. Wajdi from Nestle, and passed onto the Gulf Peace Team in Amman by Mr. Wajdi, said: "We have taken the initiative to ship them (consignments) at our own expense to the port of Aqaba where they are expected to arrive between the 25th and 30th April." By Monday there was no confirmation that the ship had arrived.

Nestle explained in its fax that: "Permission to unload the goods in the port of Aqaba can only be obtained from the authorities if we prove that they are officially consigned to one of the international aid organisations (the Red Cross, WHO, UNICEF) who undertakes to organise the transport into Iraq."

"The goods will have to be handed over in Mersin to either the International Red Cross, WHO or UNICEF, for

onward transport by road into Iraq. We ask you (Mr. Wajdi) to secure such a commitment from one of these organisations, failing which the goods cannot leave Turkey."

The determined representative of the German Red Crescent Society has been in contact with international humanitarian organisations in Geneva, but says: "Regrettably I didn't get till now any cooperation or positive response for this matter."

In order to avoid the commercial aspect of the consignment, according to Mr. Wajdi, "the Iraqi company agreed to donate the Pelargon to the Iraqi Red Crescent Society and will distribute it to Iraqi hospitals mainly in the south and north, where the need is most."

"Two hundred and eighty tonnes of Pelargon are now in the port of Piraeus, near Athens, Greece," Mr. Wajdi said.

"I have contacted the president of the Red Cross in Greece, who gave his support to deliver one cargo of Pelargon free of charge to Amman. Once delivered to Amman the Jordanian Red Crescent Society will take the responsibility of delivering it to the Iraqi Red Crescent to be distributed to the children who desperately need it," said Mr. Wajdi.

Nestle world trade organisation is also offering 1,447 tonnes of infant formula for immediate shipment at a special reduced price to any aid organisation authorised to purchase and transport such goods to Iraq.

Mr. Wajdi complains that the attention of the Western media is now wholly focussed on the plight of the Kurds and that nothing is being said about the human destruction and devastation in the rest of Iraq.



Japanese members of the Gulf Peace Team install a water purification plant at the Saddam Hospital in Kirkuk (Photo by Eric Hoskins)

Oil-rich Kirkuk lives in misery as rest of Iraq does

By Mariam M. Shabih
Jordan Times Staff Reporter

KIRKUK — With food shortages being reported in the northern governorates of Iraq, a convoy of food and medicines heads north. The food and medicines have come from Canada and Western European countries and are accompanied by its chief donor, the Gulf Peace Team.

As the convoy rolls into Kirkuk the streets are empty and the shops closed. Many foreigners accompanying the convoy look for bullet holes in the city walls, but there are none. The city is not riddled with bullets but the atmosphere is like that of a ghost town; the air only slightly polluted from an oil industry gone haywire.

Kirkuk is a major city in northern Iraq, second only to Mosul in size and importance. The population is like that of the rest of Iraq — a mosaic of ethnic and religious groups. But the largest group of people that call Kirkuk home are Iraqi Arabs; Kurds, Turkomen and Armenians are minorities.

Yet there are newspapers in Arabic, Kurdish and Armenian in Kirkuk, an oil-rich city, has had a long history of peaceful coexistence between its different ethnic groups.

But when people are need they rarely have a religion or nationality they are just hungry, so although food and medicine on the convoy was intended primarily for hospitals, the local governor suggests distributing foodstuff (milk powder in particular) to the poor directly.

The people came running, initially forming orderly lines to receive one can of milk powder each. Eventually they scuffle and push each other. Men and women form segregated lines and children are everywhere.

Iraqi soldiers control the crowds, which sometimes appear as if they were about to throw themselves on the trucks. No-one looked starved, but all seemed needy. The economic sanctions have taxed the nutritional balance of the Iraqis; that is one thing all will admit to.

Basic foodstuffs are distributed by the government and residents here say that the availability of food has improved over the last few weeks. But Iraq is not a poor country nor are Iraqis a poor people who have been accustomed to handouts from humanitarian sympathisers.

As one nutritional expert put it, "Their stomachs have been synthesised, very much like that of people in the West. So the Iraqis, unlike people in the deserts of Africa, cannot survive on grass and insects."

Without food as we know it, they will die of starvation."

Kirkuk, like other cities and towns in Iraq attests to the changes that have taken place during the past century, terms of standards of living and nutritionally balanced diets Iraqis had very little to complain about before the war.

Kirkuk residents have never been in need before. One resident explains, "Nestle have we stood in line for food. Maybe God has willed this upon us. I don't know, maybe America, I don't know."

One soldier is evidently ashamed of the masses converging on the truck full of food handouts. "Shame on you, Have you forgotten you are Iraqis and not beggars," he says under his breath to the women who are scuffling to get closer to the truck.

But the line gets larger as the volunteers and Iraqi Red Crescent Personnel hand out the milk and the truck leaves.

The line is still long but organisers agree that if they were to continue to distribute the milk to the needy on the street then their would be nothing left for the hospitals.

The Saddam Hospital is located in the suburb of Kirkuk and looks abandoned. Many windows are shattered and the hospital has an occupancy rate of 20 per cent. The nurses, most of whom speak Kurdish with one another, stand around and talk, having nothing much to do, or so it seems.

At first sight the medical storage room seems full and the hospital in good condition. But as always appearances may be deceiving.

The only doctor on call in this 420-bed hospital explains that most people have gone home because the facilities

don't allow for much more than out-patient medical services.

A moaning 15 year-old boy has tubes stuck in his back where a bullet hit him. We don't learn much more about his condition or the reason why he was shot, only that he is Kurdish, as his grandfather wearing full Kurdish head-gear attests to.

In another of the almost empty rooms of the hospital lies a woman who had her foot amputated because as a diabetic she could find no insulin in Kirkuk.

In yet another room lies a 35 year old mother of four children who was hurt during the fighting between rebels and the army. No one mentions that officially there was no fighting in Kirkuk.

There is some electricity in this once seemingly well run and dwell to do hospital but the biggest problem is basic medicines and water. There is no water. A group of Japanese members of the Gulf Peace Team has come to the rescue. They have brought a water purification plant to install at the Saddam Hospital in Kirkuk and install it today.

Before leaving the hospital they taste the water to make sure that it is fit for consumption. The hospital has clean water again.

One week later a follow-up mission arrives to discover that the hospital does not have the fuel to run the water purification machine and the machine is no longer functional.

Meanwhile the one doctor on duty, a woman, reports to a visiting foreign doctor that she has just performed a caesarean operation with "thousands of flies on the woman's wound."

In Kirkuk as, in the rest of Iraq, the misery continues.



Relief workers distribute food and milk powder in Kirkuk (Photo by Mariam Shabih)

MIDDLE EAST NEWS IN BRIEF

Rabbi calls for solidarity inter-faith

ROME (AP) — A prominent Israeli Jewish leader, speaking at a meeting of Jews, Christians and Muslims Monday, said a rise in religious fanaticism was hurting Middle East peace prospects. Shlomo Goren, chief rabbi emeritus of Israel, was among several religious leaders who spoke during the first day of the two-day meeting at Rome's city hall atop the Capitoline Hill. "We are satisfied by the fact that religion was not the principal cause of the Gulf war and did not play a vital part in the breach of peace within that region," said Rabbi Goren. But, he said, "unfortunately, peace in the Middle East is still in grave danger and to a certain extent due to the rise of religious zealotry in the region." He didn't name any sect or religious group. Recalling the common roots of Judaism, Christianity and Islam, Rabbi Goren said: "It is our holy obligation and task to avoid a danger of returning the Middle East, which presented the world with the values of the great monotheistic faiths and the ethics of the prophets, to the darkest times of the middle ages, in which religion was a double-edged sword in the hands of its bearer." Other conference speakers were a top Vatican official, Cardinal Roger Etchegaray, and Sheikh Al Moktar Assallami, mufti of Tunisia. Pope John Paul II was scheduled to receive the participants on Tuesday.

First pilgrims for Haj dock at Jeddah

DEDDAH (AP) — The first group of pilgrims sailed Monday into Saudi Arabia from India to take part in the annual Haj to Mecca and Medina in late June. A total of 1,539 pilgrims from 10 Indian states arrived at the Jeddah Islamic seaport on the Red Sea aboard the Indian ship Akbar. According to Indian diplomatic sources, about 40,000 Indian Muslims will perform pilgrimage this year. India has about 120 million Muslims. The sources, who asked not to be identified, said a man and a woman died on board the ship on their way to Saudi Arabia. They expected four more ships laden with Indian pilgrims while others will start flying in on May 15. Port Director Mohammed Ali Ben Nasser said the port has completed all arrangements to receive the pilgrims. He said a new hall was built at the main gate to accommodate more than 3,000 pilgrims at a time and that a rest house has been built outside the port. From Jeddah, pilgrims will be transported by buses to neighbouring Medina or Mecca. About two million Muslims from around the world are due to converge on the two cities for the annual Haj season, which starts on May 22, depending on the appearance of the Lunar crescent.

Turkey resumes food exports to Iraq

ANKARA (AP) — Turkey Monday lifted the restrictions on food exports to Iraq which were imposed last year in compliance with the U.N. trade embargo. The announcement from the treasury and Foreign Trade undersecretariat said the liberalisation on exports would also cover other non-military "human needs" including medicine and medical equipment. It said the undersecretariat will monitor the exports and keep the U.N. Sanctions Committee informed. The ban on imports from Iraq was to remain in force. The announcement said the move was in conformity with the April 3 decision of the U.N. Security Council permitting food exports to Iraq. Ankara ceased trading with Iraq, a major trade partner, and blocked its vital oil exports through a pipeline, in line with the U.N. bid to dislodge Iraq from Kuwait through economic pressure.

Iran executes 24 for drug trafficking

NICOSIA (AP) — Iran Monday executed 24 people for drug trafficking, the Islamic Republic News Agency (IRNA) reported. The agency said the condemned, including two women, were executed after the verdict of an Islamic court was endorsed by the prosecutor general. It did not describe the specific charges, but noted that anyone found guilty of possessing more than 30 grammes of heroin or five kilograms of opium faces the death penalty. Iran's Islamic government has vigorously attacked drug trafficking in the country. On Sunday, the agency reported that the air force had joined with anti-drug squads in battles with two caravans of drug smugglers last week. It said two dozen smugglers were killed or wounded in the battles.

Hungary's carrier resumes flights to Beirut

BEIRUT (R) — Hungary's national carrier Malev resumed flights to Beirut Monday after a nine-year stoppage because of Lebanon's civil war, airport sources said. Malev brought to five the number of East European and Arab airlines which have resumed flights to Beirut since army troops clamped down on militias this year under an Arab-backed peace plan.

Dutch minister to visit Israel in May

THE HAGUE (AP) — Dutch Foreign Minister Hans Van den Broek will travel to Israel next month for two days of talks with Israeli officials on Mideast issues, the Foreign Ministry said Monday. Mr. Van den Broek will arrive in Israel on May 6 and meet with Prime Minister Yitzhak Shamir, Foreign Minister David Levy and Defence Minister Moshe Arens, according to a Foreign Ministry spokeswoman. The spokeswoman said no specific topics have been set for the talks. She said Mr. Van den Broek, who on July 1 takes over the revolving European Community (EC) presidency, will not be travelling with other community officials. As the next community president, Van den Broek is a member of the EC troika — a three-member representative council consisting of the past, present and future presidents. The troika often travels together on visits concerning EC foreign policy. The Netherlands has a long tradition of support for the Jewish state, which has shown most recently when the Dutch military stationed Patriot missiles on Israeli soil to help defend the country against Iraqi missile attacks.

Shot fired on Nicosia green line

NICOSIA (R) — A shot fired across the Nicosia green line broke the window of a sentry's box on the Greek-Cypriot side on Monday. Cyprus Defence Minister Andreas Aloxitis told a local radio station the shot was fired by a Turkish soldier. Apart from a few accidents, the last shooting incident at the buffer strip was in December 1988. "This is a serious incident in the sense that it was completely unprovoked and we were very lucky there were no victims," Mr. Aloxitis said. The shot was fired near the British High Commission, which stands on the green line west of old Nicosia's 16th century walls. The United Nations force in Cyprus, which patrols the island's Greek-Turkish divide, was investigating.

Israelis favour peace

Jackson diehl
Washington Post

RAMAT GAN — Israelis have emerged from the war more anxious than ever to make peace, and more willing to consider compromises with the Arabs, experts say. That mood runs strongly counter to the hard line of Shimon Peres' government, and some experts here see it as a potential resource that both the United States and moderate Arabs should be trying to tap.

A recent study by the Jaffee Centre for Strategic Studies at Tel Aviv University showed that, instead of hardening Israeli opinion, the Gulf war slightly accelerated a decade-long drift by Israelis towards accepting the return of the occupied Arab territories.

According to the postwar survey, 58 per cent of Israelis now favour ending direct rule of the West Bank and Gaza, up from 50 per cent a year ago and 46 per cent five years ago. "Israelis more than before the war see peace as an important goal and are more optimistic than ever before that it can be achieved," said Asher Arian, the Haifa University political scientist who directed the survey.

"Given the right circumstances, the Israeli public could follow in either direction — towards a peace settlement or against." Arian and other political scientists say they find it paradoxical that many Israelis continue to support Shimon Peres and the Likud Party despite its hawkish stands. The Jaffee Centre poll, for example, showed half of the Israeli questioned support an international peace conference and two-thirds would agree to negotiations sponsored by Washington and Moscow. Yet when Baker failed to obtain Shamir's agreement to those very formulas in four recent trips to Tel Aviv, most Israelis shrugged.

U.N. sets up force to monitor referendum on future of Sahara

UNITED NATIONS (R) — The Security Council voted unanimously Monday to establish a U.N. force to oversee a ceasefire in Western Sahara this year and a referendum early in 1992.

The vote next year would enable the inhabitants to choose between independence and integration with Morocco.

The council meeting lasted only a few minutes and there were no speeches.

Morocco has controlled most of phosphate-rich Western Sahara since Spain evacuated its former colony in 1976. But the Polisario Front has been waging a guerrilla war for the past 15 years to press its demand for independence.

The U.N. Mission for the Referendum in Western Sahara (MINURSO), as the force is called, will comprise some 2,800 troops, police and civilians, at a cost of some \$200 million.

MINURSO is the second U.N. field operation established in less than a month. On April 9 the council set up the 1,440-man U.N. Iraq-Kuwait Observation Mission (UNIKOM) to patrol a demilitarised zone along the Iraq-Kuwait border at a cost of about \$83 million for the first six months.

The General Assembly is to approve MINURSO's budget within a few days.

Secretary-General Javier Perez de Cuellar will then propose a ceasefire date, giving about 16 weeks' notice to allow time for most of the U.N. personnel to be deployed in the sparsely-

inhabited territory. The ceasefire will be followed by a 20-week transitional period, culminating in a referendum early next year.

All U.N. members will be assessed a share of most of the costs of the \$200 million operation.

But a \$34 million programme to repatriate eligible Western Saharan voters and their families now living abroad is to be funded through voluntary contributions and will be managed by the U.N. High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR).

A report issued last week by Mr. Perez de Cuellar said Morocco had agreed to reduce the number of its troops in Western Sahara to no more than 65,000 within 11 weeks from the start of the ceasefire.

The remaining Moroccan troops, as well as Polisario forces in the territory, will be confined to certain locations and monitored by U.N. observers.

An identification commission forming part of MINURSO will identify and register all Western Saharans eligible to vote — those now 18 years or older included in a 1974 Spanish census.

A referendum commission will deal with all aspects of the actual voting, to be conducted by secret ballot, with special arrangements for those unable to read or write.

The secretary-general's special representative for Western Sahara, who will be in charge of the operation, is Johannes Manz, a Swiss diplomat appointed in January 1990.

JORDAN TELEVISION

Tel. 77111-19

PROGRAMME TWO
18:00 Children's programme
18:30 Documentaries
19:00 News in French
19:15 French varieties
19:30 News in Hebrew
20:00 News in Arabic
20:30 After Henry
21:10 Our House
21:30 News in English
22:30 Behaving Badly

PRAYER TIMES

04:21 Fajr
05:46 Sunrise
12:33 Dhur
16:12 Asr
19:28 Maghrib
20:50 Isha

St. Mary of Nazareth Church Swellish, Tel. 810754
Assemblies of God Church, Tel. 637285
St. Joseph Church Tel. 624940
Church of the Annunciation Tel. 637440

De la Salle Church Tel. 661757
Trinitarian Church Tel. 623308
Church of the Annunciation Tel. 623541
Anglican Church Tel. 623383, Tel. 628543
Armenian Catholic Church Tel. 771331
Armenian Orthodox Church Tel. 773581
St. Ephraim Church Tel. 771751
Assam International Church Tel. 685326
Evangelical Lutheran Church Tel. 811285
The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-Day Saints Tel. 815817, 654932
Church of the Nazareth Tel. 675691

WEATHER

Bulletin supplied by the Department of Meteorology.

A cold front will affect the country Wednesday. Thus it will be relatively cold, cloudy and rainy at times. Winds will be westerly moderate to fresh. In Aqaba, winds will be southerly moderate and seas rough.

Amman 13 / 21
Aqaba 20 / 29
Deserts 14 / 24

JORDAN TIMES DAILY GUIDE AND CALENDAR

Jordan Valley 18 / 27

Yesterday's high temperatures: Amman 29, Aqaba 37. Humidity readings: Amman 59 per cent, Aqaba 24 per cent.

USEFUL TELEPHONE NUMBERS

NIGHT DUTY

AMMAN:
Dr. Issa Haddad 879007
Dr. Yousef Al Faghi 657469
Dr. Abdul Aziz Tabour 787708
Dr. Walid Sahawneh 799997
Firas Pharmacy 661912
Ferdous pharmacy 776336
Al Asma pharmacy 637055
Nairoukh pharmacy 623672
Al Salam pharmacy 636720
Vacoub pharmacy 649485
Shmeisani pharmacy 637660

IRBID:

EMERGENCIES

Food Control Centre 637111
Civil Defence Department 601111
Civil Defence Immediate 630541
Rescue 775121
Rescue Police 192, 621111, 637777
Fire Brigade 801228
Blood Bank 775121
Highway Police 643402
Traffic Police 876391
Public Security Department 630521
Hotel Complaints 618500
Price Complaints 661176
Water and Sewerage 897467
Amman Municipality 787111
Complaints 787111

Telephonic Information

Emergency assistance 121
Overseas Calls 011/0230
Central Amman Telephone 623111
Repairs 623111
Abdali Telephone Repairs 661101
Jordan Television 773111
Radio Jordan 774111
Water Authority 680100
Jordan Electricity Authority 815615
Electric Power 626381
Company 016-53201
RJ Flight Information 016-53201
Queen Alia Intl. Airport 016-53201

HOSPITALS

AMMAN:
Husein Medical Centre 813613/3
Shahid Maternity J. Amn 642281/6
Al-Khalid Maternity J. Amn 642441/2
Jabal Amman Maternity 642362
Malhas J. Amman 636140
Palestine Shmeisani 664171/4
Shmeisani Hospital 649131
University Hospital 649845
Al-Muasher Hospital 667227/9

The Islamic, Abdali

Al-Ahli, Abdali 666127/37
Al-Ahli, Abdali 664164/6
Italian, Al-Muhajreen 777101/3
Al-Bashir, J. Ashrafieh 775111/26
Army, Marika 891611/15
Queen Alia Hospital 602241/50
Amal Hospital 674155
ZARQA:
Zarqa Govt. Hospital 09/993323
Zarqa National Hospital 09/991071
Ibn Sina Hospital 09/996732
IRBID:
Princeps Basma Hospital 02/275555
Greek Catholic Hospital 02/272725
Ibn Al Nafces Hospital 02/247100
AQABA:
Princess Laysa Hospital 03/314111

FOR THE TRAVELLER

QUEEN ALIA INTERNATIONAL AIRPORT

This information is supplied by Royal Jordanian (RJ) information depart-

ment at the Queen Alia International Airport Tel. 081/3202-3, where it should always be verified.

ARRIVALS

Royal Jordanian (RJ) Flights

(Terminal 1)

10:15 Jeddah (RJ)
11:00 Larnaca, Damascus (RJ)
16:00 Belgrade (RJ)
18:55 London, Paris (RJ)
19:15 Frankfurt, Vienna (RJ)
20:25 Madrid, Rome, Istanbul (RJ)
21:00 Tripoli (RJ)

Other Flights (Terminal 2)

12:15 Sanaa (YV)
15:00 Benghazi (LN)
22:00 Paris, Damascus (AF)

DEPARTURES

Royal Jordanian (RJ) Flights

(Terminal 1)

12:00 Amsterdam, New York (RJ)
12:30 Tripoli, London (RJ)
13:00 London (RJ)
21:00 New Delhi (RJ)
21:45 Calcutta, Bangkok (RJ)

Other Flights (Terminal 2)

09:15 Beirut (ME)

MARKET PRICES

Upper/lower price in fils per kg.

Apple 450 / 750
Banana 500 / 450
Banana (Mukammal) 450 / 400
Beans 330 / 250
Broad beans 300 / 250
Cabbage 180 / 120
Carrot 220 / 150
Cauliflower 250 / 200
Cucumber (large) 140 / 100
Cucumbers (small) 300 / 250
Dates 1000 / 900
Eggplant 330 / 250
Garlic 360 / 300
Grapefruit 340 / 160
Lemon 320 / 280
Lettuce (per one) 100 / 70
Marrow (large) 80 / 40
Marrow (small) 150 / 100
Onion (dry) 200 / 150
Onion (green) 170 / 120
Orange 250 / 200
Pepper (hot) 240 / 200
Pepper (sweet) 250 / 200
Potato 250 / 200
Radish 150 / 100
Sage 450 / 350
Spinach 140 / 100
Tomatoes 440 / 380

مكتبة الأصل

Home News

ACC reschedules debts, grants new loans to southern farmers

KARAK (J.T.) — The Agricultural Credit Corporation (ACC) is allowing farmers whose lands in the Karak region were affected by a devastating rain storm last month to reschedule debts due to the ACC which grant them new loans to help them carry on with their work, according to ACC Director General Mansour Ben Tarif.

"Farmers in the Karak region together owe the ACC JD 2.5 million from last year, but through a rescheduling of debts they should pay JD 1 million only during the current year," said Mr. Ben Tarif during an inspection tour of the affected regions and farms in the Karak area.

"The government's recent decision to unify all loans to farmers and to entrust the process of lending money to the ACC was a step in the right direction and a practical translation of Jordan's agricultural and economic development," said Mr. Ben Tarif in a statement to the Jordan News Agency, Petra.

He said that such decision required continued government and public support for the ACC to enhance its financial capabilities so that it can offer credit facilities to the farmers and cooperatives.

He said that the ACC planned, from now on, to rely on local resources, and not on foreign organisations, for funds to give

loans to the local farmers.

In this case, he said, the ACC would have to work out a reasonable timetable for collecting its debts from the farmers so that its operations can go ahead uninterrupted.

Mr. Ben Tarif disclosed that since its creation, in the 1960s, the ACC has granted loans to local farmers totalling JD 100 million, benefitting 75,000 citizens in various areas.

He said that only JD 63 million had been recovered, while the rest is still to be collected from 14,000 farmers.

Through these loans, he said, hundreds of thousands of dunums of rain-fed and river-irrigated land have been reclaimed and numerous agricultural and livestock projects have been implemented.

The loans, Mr. Ben Tarif said, purchased agricultural equipment and helped introduce modern technology to the agricultural sector in Jordan, like drip irrigation and plasticulture techniques.

Mr. Ben Tarif met with Karak Governor Eid Qatameh who briefed him on the agricultural situation and the extent of damages sustained as a result of the climatic conditions. He demanded that farmers be offered immediate assistance and loans to help them resume their operations.

Mayor, trade officials review problems, activity

AMMAN (Petra) — Amman Mayor Ali Suheimat Tuesday reviewed with president and members of the Amman Chamber of Commerce's board problems facing the commercial sector and the methods they envisage for developing legislations and regulations capable of boosting commercial activity.

Mr. Suheimat pointed out that the commercial activity was the most prominent landmark of economic activity which exceeds by far, in terms of performance, the country's population.

He stressed that continuous contacts and dialogue between the chamber and the municipality could help crystallise practical concepts and ideas, capable of enabling legislators and technicians to reformulate some systems and regulations and introduce improvements in the economic activity.

He noted that the legislations in force had not yet taken their final shape, but are subject to amendments, warranted by the

nature of the current stage.

Mr. Suheimat said the current economic stage, the country was passing through, was a very difficult stage "caused by circumstances beyond our ability to handle."

Mr. Suheimat announced the formation of a joint committee, grouping representatives of Amman Municipality and Amman Chamber of Commerce, to study the ideas and proposals presented to the committee.

President of ACC Board of Directors Mohammad Asfour reviewed problems of the commercial sector and called on the municipality to be flexible in issuing temporary licences of professions and to reconsider the reestablishment of popular markets.

Mr. Asfour called on the mayor to show more flexibility in allowing cars to stop for picking up and dropping passengers and for buying things, saying that the measures taken by the municipality in this regard are not sufficient.

Yemeni official leaves Amman for Damascus

RAMTHA (J.T.) — Yemen's Deputy Prime Minister and Foreign Minister Abdul Karim Al Iryani Tuesday wound up a visit to Jordan and left for Damascus by land. He was seen off by local officials from the Ramtha district as well as Foreign Ministry officials in Amman.

Mr. Iryani, who delivered a message to His Majesty King Hussein from Yemeni President Ali Abdullah Saleh, said in pre-departure statement here that his talks in Amman had centred on developments in the Arab and international arena, with special focus on the recent events in the Gulf and on Yemeni-Jordanian relations.

Mr. Iryani said that he would

meet with Syrian President Hafez Al Assad in Damascus to deliver a message from the Yemeni leader and will also go to Lebanon on a similar mission, before going to Egypt to meet with President Hosni Mubarak.

Mr. Iryani told the Jordan News Agency, Petra that his mission was in the course of Yemen's consultations with Arab governments to end differences among Arab states and to re-establish solidarity and end the differences that emerged with the Gulf crisis.

While in Amman, Mr. Iryani discussed with Foreign Minister Taher Al Masri coordination of Yemeni-Jordanian positions at the forthcoming meeting of the Organisation of Islamic Conference.

N. Korean envoy presents credentials

The ambassador of the Democratic People's Republic of Korea Kung Sok Ung on Monday presented his credentials to His Majesty King Hussein at Raghadan Palace.

Due to a translation mistake,

the Jordan Times yesterday erroneously identified the ambassador as representing South Korea. The Jordan Times regrets the error and wishes the ambassador success in his mission in the Kingdom.

WHAT'S GOING ON

The following listings are compiled from monthly bulletins and the daily Arabic press. Readers are advised to verify the listed time and place with the concerned institutions.

EXHIBITION

- ★ Exhibition of fine handicrafts, weavings, quilts, on Friday, at the Abu Jaher estate-Yadociah (open: 10 a.m.-9 p.m.)
- ★ Dried flowers exhibition by Hind Kariri Nuweirah at the Royal Cultural Centre.

Jordan celebrates Labour Day

Dughmi urges Jordanians to accept current vacancies

AMMAN (J.T.) — Minister of Labour Abdul Karim Al Dughmi Tuesday issued an appeal to Jordanian job-seekers to accept available posts left vacant by the non-Jordanian workers and earn a decent living.

"The Ministry of Labour, through the Vocational Training Corporation (VTC), is organising training courses for job seekers to qualify them for the available jobs and has raised the motto of 1991 as the year for substituting foreign workers with local citizens," said the minister in a message issued on the eve of Labour Day Wednesday.

Labour Day anniversary this year follows serious developments in the Arab area affecting the labour markets of Jordan and other Arab countries, with negative impact on the national industrial production, said the minister.

"The government in cooperation with the private sector's employers and workers, is exerting strenuous efforts to overcome the consequences of the Gulf war and the various challenges involved in the process of development," the minister added.

He paid tribute to the workers of the occupied Arab territories and said that "Arabs take pride in their heroic steadfastness in the face of Israeli repressive rule."

Prime Minister Mudar Badran Monday met the minister of labour to discuss the question of unemployment which now stands at 16.8 per cent of the total labour force in Jordan.

Ministry of Labour Secretary General Saleh Khasawneh told Radio Jordan at noon Tuesday that the total number of unemployed Jordanians, including the

returnees from Kuwait and the Gulf, now stands at 105,000. These job-seekers have already registered with the Civil Service Commission or the labour offices around the country. Mr. Khasawneh said.

The labour minister told the prime minister that the Jordanian labour force was estimated at 630,000 and noted that the country now employed 160,000 non-Jordanian workers, of whom 23 per cent work illegally, not holding valid work permits.

Mr. Khasawneh said that Labour Day was celebrated as a national day in Jordan in recognition of the efforts of the workers in the process of construction and development.

On the occasion of Labour Day all government departments and public institutions in the country will remain closed.

Cairo meeting reviews role of Afro-Asian countries in international affairs

AMMAN (Petra) — The Legal Committee of the Afro-Asian group which met in Cairo discussed, among other topics on the agenda, prospects for the role of African and Asian nations in international affairs in general and at the United Nations Organisation in particular, according to Dr. Majed Khalifeh the justice minister who represented Jordan at the meeting.

The minister, who returned to Amman Monday evening, said that the Jordanian delegation had submitted proposals for the re-examination of the United Nations Organisation's system in the light of new world developments, particularly in the wake of the Gulf crisis which caused so much distress to the people in Asian and African countries.

Mr. Khalifeh said that since the creation of the world organisation numerous events occurred around the world, affecting the

status of many countries and causing the emergence of new realities.

In view of the dismemberment of the Warsaw pact and the internal problems of the Soviet Union and China, the arena has been left for three Western nations to play the main roles in world affairs," the minister said.

He said that the Asian and African countries should have an equal role in world affairs and inside the United Nations Organisation.

According to Dr. Khalifeh, his views drew support and favourable response from the countries attending the committee's 30th meeting in Cairo.

The minister said he had raised the question of promoting the role of the International Court of Justice, which he said, should be authorised to handle international disputes and questions re-

lated to border demarcations, and deal with all issues with fairness and through peaceful means.

Referring to the Palestine question, Dr. Khalifeh said that he drew attention to the continued ordeal of the Palestinian people under Israeli occupation and a general consensus was reached by the participating countries on the need to unify their stands vis-a-vis the ongoing oppression against the Palestinian people.

The minister said he had raised the question of environment pollution and the issue of industrialised nations dumping their poisonous waste in Africa and Asia and said that such a practice was a source of real danger to the peoples of the third world. A total of 42 nations were represented at the Cairo meeting.

Ministry launches projects to revive, promote tourism

By Maha Ahdassi
Special to the Jordan Times

AMMAN — The Ministry of Tourism is currently studying a new programme for promoting tourism, according to which 100 tourists at a time will be accommodated overnight in a bedouin tent and experience the true bedouin life.

Ministry's Secretary General Nasri Atallah said that although Petra was the main attraction for most tourists, Jordan has more to offer than that.

"Petra is the jewel in the necklace of tourism," Mr. Atallah said. "But we must polish the necklace that holds the jewel."

Mr. Atallah added that the project under way was an opportunity provided for tourists to stay overnight where they can be alone with nature. "There will not even be any electricity in those tents," Mr. Atallah said.

Tourists, however, have

varied opinion regarding this idea.

Gerry Gyngell, the administrative manager of a London-based travel agency who was in Jordan last week, said that he, personally, would enjoy an overnight stay in a tent, but was not sure about his clients.

"Our clients are usually past retirement age and often come to Jordan on religious pilgrimages," Mr. Gyngell said. "I do not think they would be adventurous enough to stay in the desert overnight."

Mr. Atallah said that this programme would help to further develop the cultural side of tourism in Jordan.

Sylvie Collombat, a journalist for a French magazine, who visited Jordan on a week-long familiarisation trip organised and jointly funded by the Ministry of Tourism and Royal Jordanian Airlines last week, said that she was fascinated by the atmosphere of the bedouin life in Umm Qais.

"I loved experiencing the bedouin life in Umm Qais, and I would definitely enjoy staying overnight in a tent," Ms. Collombat said.

The tour manager of an Italian travel agency said that whether this project was adopted or not, she would be returning to Jordan this summer with friends. "There is so much to see in Jordan that is unique," Ms. Clerico said.

"This is the Dead Sea and Petra as well as the chance to experience the bedouin life," she added.

The new plan is only one of many projects that the Ministry of Tourism is launching in order to revive the tourism industry in Jordan after the Gulf crisis and the ensuing war which was responsible for the loss of tourism to Jordan.

"During the boom tourism year of 1989, Jordan received about 600,000 tourists," Mr. Atallah said. "After the beginning of the Gulf crisis, on Aug. 2, we did not receive a single tourist."

Relief organisations send aid to Iraq

AMMAN (J.T.) — The Amman-based Catholic Relief Services (CRS) Tuesday dispatched a convoy of trucks laden with relief supplies worth \$94,000 to Iraqi victims of the Gulf war.

A statement by the CRS office here said that the convoy carried flour, sugar, rice, milk powder, corn oil, cartons of cheese and canned meat to the Iraqi people.

The relief items were intended for various regions of Iraq, especially the northern parts of the country, the statement added.

The seven-truck convoy was organised in cooperation with the Jordan National Red Crescent Society (JNRCS) and the Iraqi Red Crescent Society.

The Catholic Relief Services is an international relief and development agency of the U.S. Catholic Conference. It assists people worldwide on the basis of need.

In another development Ananda Marga Universal Relief Team (AMURT) has recently sent its

second convoy of relief materials to Iraq. This, along with its third convoy, planned for next week, included building materials (such as cement and iron rods), electrical equipment, as well as milk powder and baby foods.

The building materials are for reconstruction of the hospital in Karbala, a project AMURT is undertaking along with Gulf Peace Team and Middle East Action Network. A generator has recently been installed at the hospital allowing some facilities to be used. Other generators are to be bought by these teams for the same purpose.

AMURT is now replenishing 1,000 oxygen tanks which are a great necessity for any hospital.

AMURT has also established an agreement with the Iraqi government to sponsor 2,000 orphans for the time required for them to be stabilised.

After reconstruction of the Karbala hospital, plans have been formulated to help rebuild a hos-

pital in Basra too.

Ramanada Avadhuta, the director of AMURT, researched the possibility of starting a series of model communities, known as "master units", which AMURT and its parent organisation, Ananda Marga, have started in dozens of countries.

These communities have several purposes. They are designed to be small communities. In a rural setting. They generally concern themselves with both individual development (including schools, free health care, job training, literacy training) and community development (including reforestation, botanical gardens, agricultural development, cooperative farming, alternative energy sources, employment in economically depressed areas).

AMURT is also eager to establish such projects in Jordan, and has had some initial consultations with individuals here on this type of project.

Jordan marks anniversary of King's assumption of powers

AMMAN (J.T.) — Jordan Thursday celebrates the 38th anniversary of His Majesty King Hussein's assumption of his constitutional powers.

Since assuming his duties in 1953, King Hussein has been devoting his time and efforts to serving his country, and the Arab Nation at large, and his relentless endeavours have been rewarded with development and progress in Jordan's various fields.

The Palestine issue has been among the foremost concern of the King, and his effort continue to help the Palestinian people regain their rights in their own homeland.

Under the leadership of King Hussein, Jordan has won worldwide respect and now enjoys stability and security which contribute to the Kingdom's progress and development.

On the eve of the anniversary, the Jordan News Agency, Petra, issued a statement referring especially to the fact that the Kingdom enjoys an atmosphere of democracy, a true endeavour of King Hussein who is keen on securing for his countrymen a climate of freedom and offering them responsibility in participating in the process of constructing the country in a climate of political stability and socio-economic progress.

The agency said that the principles of the Great Arab Revolt have been serving as a guide-line for the Jordanian leadership and have been enabling the country to attain self-reliance and freedom



from foreign rule.

The agency referred to the projected national charter as the umbrella for all political orientations and groupings to pool their resources and pursue development and progress in the Kingdom.

Jordan, China update agreements, discuss ties

AMMAN (Petra) — Minister of Planning Khaled Amin Abdullah Tuesday returned to Amman from a visit to China and said that he reached agreement with Chinese officials on bilateral cooperation in economic, trade, technological and technical fields.

The minister, who spent 10 days in Peking to discuss bilateral cooperation, said he signed the minutes of the talks with the Chinese officials, updating agreements signed by Amman and Peking in 1985.

According to the minutes, China will import 400,000 tonnes of potash during the current year and will buy unspecified amounts of Jordanian phosphate, said the minister.

The two sides expressed desire to expand the scope of trade exchanges and to diversify the types of products.

The Jordanian delegation handed the Chinese officials a list of Jordanian goods, including pharmaceuticals, which can be

sold to China, the minister noted.

Agreement was reached on a \$10 million Chinese soft loan to Jordan to help the Kingdom import Chinese goods and to finance development projects; the Chinese side expressed desire to offer Jordan an additional loan later on, Dr. Abdullah added.

The minister said he introduced to the Chinese incentives offered by Jordan to investors and prospects of launching joint ventures.

The Chinese side, he said, expressed satisfaction with cooperation conducted with the Arab Potash Company (APC) which offered Chinese technicians training in producing potash in China.

The minister said the two sides had underlined the need for continuing bilateral cooperation and said an agreement on cooperation in the fields of science and technology would be signed at a later date.

The minutes signed by the two

sides in Peking provided for cooperation between the national shipping lines in the two countries, to operate between the Red Sea and the Far Eastern ports, to help promote the exchange of trade between countries in the Far East and Jordan as well as Red Sea ports.

The minister said agreement was reached on utilising the joint maritime venture for exporting Jordanian phosphate and potash.

Dr. Abdullah met with the Chinese head of state and the foreign minister who lauded His Majesty King Hussein's policies. He also met ministers responsible for science and technology to discuss bilateral cooperation.

The minister was accompanied on the visit by representatives of the Amman Chamber of Industry and Trade, the Jordan Phosphate Mines Company, the APC, the Jordan National Shipping Lines, the Natural Resources Authority and the Ministry of Planning.

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Day to be commemorated

JORDAN'S COMMEMORATION of Labour Day today is a fitting occasion to recall that the right to work is a cardinal principle in the Universal Declaration of Human Rights, adopted and proclaimed in December of 1948. Article 23 of that declaration states that "everyone has the right to work, to a free choice of employment, to just and favourable conditions of work and to protection against unemployment." That famous article goes on to stipulate that everyone, without any discrimination, has the right to equal pay for equal work and to just and favourable remuneration ensuring for himself and his family an existence worthy of human dignity to be supplemented, if and when necessary, by other means of social protection. The declaration also bestows on everyone the right to form and join trade unions for the protection of his or her interests.

This right to work as enshrined in the 1948 declaration was faithfully reflected later on in the International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights that entered into force on Jan. 3, 1976.

The International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights that also came into force in 1976 also highlighted the right to work as part and parcel of the civil and political rights that everyone is entitled to under customary international law.

Jordan is a state party to the two international covenants and is bound by their principles and provisions. In other words the country is treaty bound to respect and implement the requirements of the two covenants, not to mention the guiding lights of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights, which is the source of all contemporary international and national legislations on human rights in general. As a matter of fact, this country has already done a great deal to meet its treaty obligations whether under the covenants or the resolutions and principles of the International Labour Office, the ILO.

As state parties to the various international human rights and labour conventions, the industrial countries of the world are duty bound to help developing countries like Jordan in meeting their obligations to their peoples. The Kingdom in fact has received valuable aid from many friendly countries especially in the wake of the Gulf crisis. Yet its economic woes persist, especially its unemployment crisis. No less than 200,000 Jordanian expatriates have returned to Jordan in the wake of the Gulf war only to further exacerbate the country's unemployment problem. As there is a direct link between the Gulf crisis and Jordan's difficult economic conditions, including the worsening unemployment situation, the international community is invited to establish a special fund to compensate Jordan and other similarly affected countries for their economic and fiscal hardships that ensued from the Gulf war. The much talked about new international order needs to be amplified in order to have two complementary dimensions: one political and the other economic. There is no way that peace, security and stability in the region can be attained without an integrated approach to the problems of the area including its economic needs. Jordan is already taking steps to tackle unemployment. Yet the real remedial measures to Jordan's unemployment crisis and its inability to provide employment to its people can never be realised without supplementing the generous aid that the country has been receiving mostly from European countries and Japan with an international or regional compensatory fund that aims to assist Jordan and similarly affected countries to face the new challenges posed to them in the aftermath of the Gulf crisis and the war that followed.

ARABIC PRESS COMMENTARIES

Al Ra'i daily Tuesday criticised a statement by Soviet Middle East envoy Primakov in which he assumed that the Arabs were urging the Soviets to confront the United States in matters related to the Arab-Israeli conflict. Primakov had said the Arabs should not rely on Moscow in confronting Washington because the situation has not changed, but such statement is full of falsehood because the Arabs never wanted a U.S.-Soviet confrontation but rather an agreement on resolving the problem, said the paper. The Arabs had in the past considered the Soviet Union as one of two superpowers in the world, and had relied on the Soviets for support; but now that the situation has changed, the Arabs still want Moscow to take a role in settling the Arab-Israeli issue by peaceful means based on justice, noted the daily. Despite their knowledge that Moscow has now given way to the Americans to remain as the sole superpower, the Arabs had been hoping that Moscow would back its words with deeds and help end Israel's occupation and atrocities, the paper continued. It is strange to hear Primakov imagining that the Arabs want Moscow to confront the Americans because that was not the Arabs' intention in the past nor is it at present, it added. What the Arabs want, said the paper, is to see the Soviet Union as a member nation at the Security Council playing a meaningful role in re-establishing peace based on the international legitimacy and U.N. resolutions, and they would welcome any initiative aimed to achieve that goal.

Al Dustour daily said in an editorial Monday that Prime Minister Mudar Badran's visits to the ministries of Labour and Water resulted in the release of figures and data of paramount importance to the public, because the questions of unemployment and the water crisis in the Kingdom are on the mind, of every Jordanian citizen all the time. Unemployment now accounts for 17 per cent of the total Jordanian labour force, and a total of 160,000 non-Jordanians are employed in the country of whom three quarters are without work permits, said the paper. These figures and the briefing offered at the meeting together present a serious situation for the Kingdom; and unless it is speedily solved, the country would be facing more complexities in the future, said the paper.

The U.S. victor has an obligation to the Middle East

By Zbigniew Brzezinski

WASHINGTON — I still think that punitive sanctions would have better served America's long-term interest, but clearly the military victory over Iraq was easier than expected. However, there is a growing — but still avoidable — risk that the war may come to be seen as having precipitated a geopolitical disaster and a moral disgrace.

The increasingly messy aftermath of the war gives rise to two central questions:

What are the principal benefits and debits of the U.S.-led triumph? And what are the immediate and longer-range implications for subsequent U.S. policy?

The benefits are undeniably impressive.

First, a blatant act of aggression was rebuffed and punished. An important political and even legal point, central to international decency, was reaffirmed: that the community of nations will not tolerate the brutal use of force by one state against another.

Second, U.S. military power is henceforth likely to be taken more seriously. The technological and strategic virtuosity of the military performance, as well as the display of personal determination by U.S. decision makers, is bound to have a chilling effect even as far away as North Korea, a dictatorship reputed to be acquiring nuclear weapons of its own.

Third, the Middle East and the Gulf region are now clearly an American sphere of preponderance. Pro-American Arab regimes feel more secure; so does Israel. U.S. access to oil is now not in jeopardy.

Fourth, the Soviet Union, until recently America's principal rival in the Middle East, to all intents and purposes has been reduced largely to the status of a spectator.

However, some negative consequences must also be placed on the scales.

First, the most immediate regional beneficiary of Iraq's downfall has been Iran, a power openly hostile to the United States and to America's satellite regimes on the Arabian Peninsula. America's military presence in the region is now imperative. This is not necessarily inimical to U.S. interests, but it is potentially a

source of new instabilities.

Second, that presence is related to the growing danger that the war's aftermath is intensifying the region's barely suppressed ethnic, religious and tribal animosities. The war against Iraq could become part of a prolonged chain reaction, eventually "Lebanonising" the region as a whole while bogging the United States down in it.

Third, the very intensity of the air assault on Iraq gives rise to concern that the conduct of the war may come to be seen as evidence that Americans view Arab lives as worthless.

That last consideration raises sensitive moral issues. The war was presented to the public issues as a "just war," made necessary both by the immorality of Saddam Hussein's action and by the scale of the threat he posed. Saddam was portrayed as another Hitler, menacing the whole world. In fact, he turned out to have been much more like Musolini.

And that raises the moral question of the proportionality of response.

U.S. spokesmen repeatedly stated that the objective was not the destruction of Iraq, and that the enemy was Saddam and not the Iraqi people. However, the air assault against Iraq was heavily directed, doubtless for military reasons, at its ability to operate as a modern society, with adverse consequences for the well-being of innocent people.

This conclusion emerges starkly from the report submitted to the United Nations by the Finnish head of a special investigative mission, Marti Ahtissari. It itemises the destruction of nonmilitary targets.

Some 90 per cent of the industrial labour force has been deprived of work and income; the country's "sole laboratory producing veterinary vaccines" was destroyed by bombing; so were its "seed warehouses," with "all stocks of potatoes and vegetable

seeds," thereby placing in jeopardy seasonal planting.

Because of the deliberate destruction of power plants and other sources of energy, "all electrically operated installations have ceased to function," causing a shortage of water and forcing the population to rely on contaminated water supply. "All modern communications systems have been destroyed," etc.

The mission concluded that the population faced "a catastrophe" from epidemics and undernourishment, unless relief arrive.

The human misery produced by the war has been compounded by the abortive Shiite and Kurdish revolts. Obviously (though naively) counting on U.S. support, the uprisings have been repressed with massive brutality. The resulting flight of the Kurds then created further suffering, with the Kurds subjected to death and deprivations on a shocking scale.

All this is relevant to any calculation of the war's benefits and debits.

It raises the possibility that the war may have been a classic case of an underreaction to earlier signs of Saddam's aggressiveness that late prompted an overreaction to the eventual act of aggression. This overreaction may have prompted what might be deemed in moral terminology a "disproportionate" response.

It is important to raise this troubling issue, especially given the emphasis on the idea of the "just war" and the deliberate evocation of Churchillian symbols and rhetoric to gain public support. The fact is that the war was not waged against all odds, against an all-powerful opponent, as had been the case against Hitler, but that it pitted the world's only superpower against a Third World country armed with second-best weapons.

What task should the United States now shoulder, bearing morality and geopolitics in mind? The point of departure for any answer must be the recognition

that the United States has unprecedented influence on the fate of an entire region.

After World War II Harry Truman recognised America's moral and political responsibility for the future of Europe. He rose to that challenge through a firm commitment to large-scale relief, reconstruction and reconciliation. Today the Gulf and the Middle East need all three.

Relief must be undertaken on a massive scale: for the Kurds in the first place, for the Shiites and for other Iraqis as well.

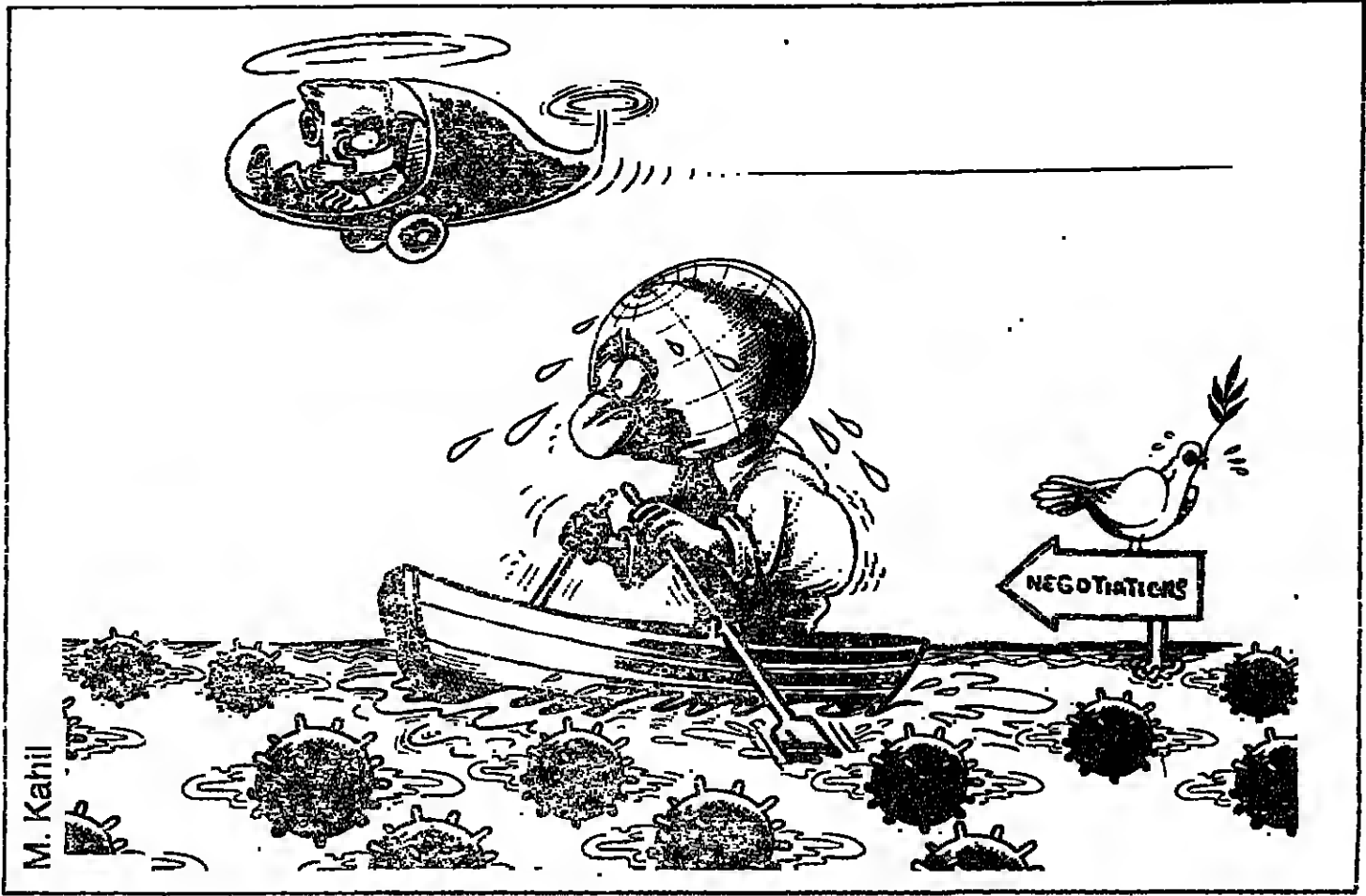
The dispatching of U.S. forces to shield encampments in Iraq for the displaced Kurds is a right step, but it is difficult to understand how U.S. forces can vacate the occupied parts of southern Iraq without first obtaining a firm commitment from Baghdad to alter the political status of the Iraqi Kurds very significantly. Beyond this immediate, partly moral and partly political imperative, it behooves the United States to pursue actively three goals: a regional security arrangement; a process for redistribution of regional wealth and for enhanced economic cooperation among all the region's states (including Israel); and a serious movement towards Arab-Israeli peace.

Fortunately, there are signs that the United States is moving in that direction. But to succeed it will have to pursue all three goals together. There can be no regional security, including arms control and other arrangements to minimise a repetition of the Iraqi aggression, without some progress on the other two central issues.

And there can be no movement on Israeli-Arab peace, including eventually some form of statehood for the Palestinians, without a wider accommodation that tackles the region's strategic and social vulnerability.

President Truman recognised the challenge of relief, reconstruction and reconciliation. America rose to the challenge. That is why Europe is safe and healthy today. For geopolitical and moral reasons America should undertake no less in the Middle East.

The writer was national security advisor in the Carter administration. His article is reprinted from The New York Times.



War continues by other means

By Peter Jenkins

IN THE United States the victory parades continue, but in the Middle East the fruits of victory rot before our eyes. Every day the reckoning of the Gulf war mounts higher.

Item: 15 million displaced Kurds congregate on the frontiers of Iran and Turkey and die at an estimated rate of 1,000 per day. Considerations of humanity have driven the United States, Britain and others to an open-ended military involvement in Iraq that they never intended.

Item: the oil wells of Kuwait continue to burn, poisoning the ecosystem. Says Christopher Flavin, vice-president of the Worldwatch Institute, "There is no question that there is an immense ecological catastrophe in the Gulf. The question, really, is whether it will recover, and if so, at what rate it will recover."

Item: Iraq itself is devastated. Reports the U.N. Undersecretary-General, Martti Ahtissari, to the Security Council: "The recent conflict has wrought near-apocalyptic results upon the economic infrastructure of what had been, until January 1991, a rather highly urbanised and mechanised society. Now most means of modern life support have been destroyed or rendered tenuous. Iraq has, for some time to come, been relegated to a pre-industrial age, but with all the disabilities of post-industrial dependency on an intensive use of energy and technology."

Kurds

(Continued from page 1)

Mudarrisi said Saddam decided to disband the million-strong Popular Army three days ago to collect the force's weapons because large numbers of its men had joined the rebels.

In Safwan, south Iraq, U.S. forces flew 1,000 Iraqi refugees, many vowing to continue their fight against Saddam Hussein's regime, to sanctuary in Saudi Arabia as the U.S. army prepared to pull out of southern Iraq.

"We hope the opposition will train us there and give us arms so that the hour of victory will come nearer," said an army deserter. He gave his name only as Hisham for fear of reprisals against his family still in Iraq.

While Iraqi dissidents packed up to quit their homeland, possibly for years, other nationals displaced by the Gulf crisis complained that their embassies had abandoned them at the squalid desert refugee camps along the Iraqi-Kuwaiti border.

"Please call my embassy and tell them I'm here," begged refugees at the Kuwaiti-run Abdoli camp. They included Lebanese, Syrians, Egyptians, Jordanians, Algerians and one Yugoslav.

A U.S. officer helping run a nearby camp guarded by the U.S. army near the Iraqi town of Safwan said American forces would leave southern Iraq as soon as all Iraqis who wanted to go to Saudi Arabia had been flown out.

"Today we flew close to 1,000 people to Rafha camp (in Saudi Arabia) and we'll be flying more in the next few days," said Major

qi people may soon face a further imminent catastrophe, which could include epidemic and famine.

The Kurds, meanwhile, are involved in a unique catastrophe, not because of its scale, although that is large enough, but — as a U.N. refugee official told The New York Times — because of "the combination of negative factors — huge numbers, a short time frame, terrible conditions on such an enormous level and having so many of them arrive at the border destitute and exhausted."

Meanwhile, Saddam remains entrenched in power with the latest Western intelligence assessments increasingly gloomy about the prospects for his early overthrow. Whatever chance there might have been of a military coup when the hostilities ended has been scotched by the Kurdish and Shiite uprisings.

Nor has the consensus in the Security Council extended to the consequences of the war it authorised. The American and British are urging the U.N. to take on the burden of peacekeeping in northern Iraq, but it shows little willingness to become involved in the internal affairs of a sovereign state. Its member states have too many abuses of human rights and separatist movements on their own door-steps.

This leaves President Bush with a foot firmly planted in the quagmire he was determined to avoid, with the British in support. It promises to be a long and messy entanglement containing

the possibilities of future conflict. The plight of the Kurds may have made it unavoidable, but the moral of the story is that it is easier to fight wars than to deal with their aftermath.

Sanctions remain in force for the purpose of enforcing the ceasefire terms, which include the destruction of Iraqi chemical and nuclear weapons facilities. While the Western allies cling to the hope of Saddam's overthrow, pressure mounts in the U.N. for a relaxation of food and energy sanctions in time to avert the further human catastrophe predicted by the U.N. mission.

Western policy makes little coherent sense — sanctions administered with one hand, relief distributed with the other, the progressive occupation of northern Iraq and the rapid American evacuation of occupied southern Iraq. Only the receding hope of Saddam's imminent demise unites the contradiction of goals.

Yet for as long as Saddam survives in power, the post-war convulsions of Iraq condemn the Western allies either to occupy substantial swathes of his territory or to promote accommodations between him and his aggrieved minorities.

The internal agencies of Iraq, meanwhile, spill over into the neighbouring states and further threaten the stability of the whole region. The peace has turned into a nightmare, the continuation of the war by other means — The Independent

Tom Grubbs of the 44th civil affairs company.

Saudi Arabia has started building a well-equipped camp at Rafha and has said it will take an unlimited number of Iraqi refugees. The U.S. airlift began on Sunday and Grubbs said more than 2,000 Iraqis had been flown to Rafha so far.

Iraq has taken in more than 2,000 refugees who have Iranian links but said it would not take more. Shiite Iraqis are sympathetic to Iraq's Shiite population and backed their failed uprising against the government in March, after the Gulf war.

Grubbs said U.S. troops had told the refugees any one who wants to go to the Saudi camp would be flown there.

"We told them to make up their minds. If they want to go,

we will take them and we told them once we leave we will not be able to provide them with food and protection," Grubbs said.

Many refugees said their greatest fear if they stayed was what loyalist Iraqis might do once the Americans left.

Iraq criticises Syria, Iran

Iraq Tuesday criticised a visit to Syria by Iranian President Akbar Hashemi Rafsanjani and said the two countries were trying to harm the Iraqi people.

Rafsanjani's three-day visit to Syria, which ended on Monday, opened "another chapter in the two countries' efforts to harm the Iraqi people," the government newspaper Al Jumhuriyah said in an editorial.

The visit "comes amid a cere-

Compassion is not enough

To the Editor

The British foreign secretary, Mr. Douglas Hurd, is due in Amman on Thursday. We remember him well as a man of great words full of compassion: "Anyone with a sense of humanity must sympathise with the Palestinians... Their lands are occupied, they have no political rights, and they are daily victims of a misguided policy which believes that the security of Israel must rest on closed universities, illegitimate settlements, and even collective punishment..."

Well put. Yet, a sense of humanity and sympathy alone is not enough to change things. Compassion is good for those who feel it, but the recipient of this compassion remains in misery if no action is taken. We believe that those who are responsible for the misery should do more than compassionate talk for a solution. They should not just leave it to others like Mr. Bush, Mr. Baker, and the coffin-maker.

Elinor Kaiser-Mohammad
P.O. Box 540383
Abu Nuseir — Amman

monial atmosphere of delight at what happened to Iraq, and gloating over the Iraqi people's suffering as a result of a barbaric aggression in which more than 30 allied states participated."

The Iraqi news agency (INA) quoted the paper as saying:

Rafsanjani, making his first foreign trip since he became president in 1989, flew in Turkey on Monday to discuss the plight of hundreds of thousands of refugee families stranded along their borders with Iraq.

"The Iranian side, like the Syrian regime, did not hesitate to stab Iraq and aid the saboteur gangs which despoiled the Iraqis' blood and honour."

Britain urges faster action

Britain meanwhile wants faster action from the United Nations and its members to help Kurdish refugees in the mountains of northern Iraq, a senior government official said Tuesday.

"Our view is it is urgent to get everybody down from the mountains," the senior official said. "There is a great risk of a lot more people dying from disease. We are well aware of that and we are pushing everybody to move very quickly."

Britain considered the United Nations had been slow to offer military protection to the Kurds and was looking for a quick endorsement of its plan for a U.N.

police force to do the job, the official said.

"We all wanted the United Nations involved in this. We all wanted them (allied troops) to go in wearing U.N. berets. If we had waited for that we still wouldn't have had any troops in there. I would hate to think what that would have meant."

The official denied that Britain had a secret agenda to create a separate Kurdish state in northern Iraq or that it was stretching the bounds of diplomacy over the issue.

German Foreign Minister Hans-Dietrich Genscher endorsed the British plan to install a U.N. police force in Iraq.

Genscher met with Prime Minister John Major and Foreign Secretary Douglas Hurd to discuss a broad range of subjects, including foreign and security policy in post-cold war Europe and the situation in the Middle East, British government spokesman said.

In Riyadh, Saudi Arabia, Turkish President Turgut Ozal was quoted Monday as saying his country will not reopen the Trans-Turkey oil pipeline for Iraq until the United Nations gives its approval.

"The pipeline remains closed ... because of the (U.N.) sanctions committee decisions," said Ozal in an interview published in the Saudi Arabian daily Asharq Al Awsat.

Weekender

May 1, 1991

Published Every Thursday

Music business flourishing in old part of Baghdad



Fadhl Hamid Shihab plays his "zirna" outside the coffeshop.

By Debbie Lovatt from Baghdad

Special to the Jordan Times
BUSINESS is flourishing for Mr. Rashid Al Hamza Al Qaysi. He is the owner and manager of a music shop in Al Fadhl area of old Baghdad.

Trumpets of various shapes and sizes are strung outside the shop announcing to passers-by that this is the place to hire musicians.

Mr. Al Qaysi has more than a hundred players working for him. They work in groups of four; one plays the trumpet — he is the leader — one plays the tambourine, one plays a drum and another a kind of cornet.

Music-makers are required on three occasions. The most well-known is marriages, but they also play at the funerals of martyrs if the family wishes and at the homecoming celebrations of prisoners of war.

In the case of weddings, and in the words of Mr. Qaysi, "members of the groom's family come to the

shop. I advise them on how many players they will need depending on the size of the wedding. Then they argue about the price and length of time they want music for."

For marriages there is a set price, but "if we go to the family of an Iraqi soldier who was martyred or who was a prisoner of war, there is no set price. If they give some money it's fine, if they don't it's no problem," explained the 50-year-old shop-owner.

The groups play traditional Arabic folk music, happy and sad depending on the occasion. Music for martyrs funerals may be happy as the family celebrates the soul of the departed ascending immediately to heaven even though they themselves are saddened by the loss of a loved one.

Mr. Qaysi said: "We have been busy during the war. We went to play for about ten families of martyrs. One was a relative of mine."

Sipping hot sweet black tea in his small crowded shop, Mr. Qaysi looked forward to the summer: "Summer is the

best time for business because more people get married then and it is more fun for everyone as it is the time of school holidays too."

An old man with a wrinkly face and laughing eyes who had been drinking tea and playing dominoes in the cafe across the street came in the music shop to give a demonstration.

"I am 63 and have been a musician since I was 16. My father did the same thing and when I was young I used to go with him to parties and that's how I learned to play," he said before putting his pipe to his mouth and serenading all present.

This man, Fadhl Hamid Shihab, lives with his wife, four daughters and their husbands and children in the same house. They number fourteen in all. The money he gets from his work is enough to support them.

Mr. Shihab plays a kind of pipe known as a "zirna" in colloquial Iraqi and as a snake-charmer's pipe in Hollywood English. "This zirna is 80 years old. A friend of



A group of musicians playing outside Mr. Rashid Al Hamza Al Qaysi's music shop (Photo by Debbie Lovatt)

mine gave it to me ten years ago. It's better than mine so I play it all the time," said the turban-wearing galabaya-clad old pipe, showing off the battered wooden instrument.

The shop owner has ten children. Muhammad, the middle one is ten and the oldest, Karim, is seventeen. Both boys play the trumpet. "I watched the others play

and then I practised on my own, that's how I learned to play the trumpet," said Muhammad. There are no schools of music.

Mr. Qaysi, whose father was a merchant, taught himself to play the instruments from watching friends and practising.

"When I was ten I worked in a group playing the tam-

bourine. I was twenty when I opened this shop which has been here for thirty years," said the owner.

Mr. Qaysi also sells and repairs instruments. He hopes that his son, Muhammad, will take his place in the shop and continue the business he established when he decides to stop working.

By Clare Pedrick

Vatican steps up efforts to bridge gap with Islam

VATICAN CITY — When Polish leader Lech Walesa visited the Vatican at the height of the Gulf conflict, his old friend and compatriot Pope John Paul II confided that he had been suffering from insomnia since fighting started. Vatican aides have told how, in the early hours of Jan. 17, the Pontiff was wakened by one of his cardinals with the news that the war had begun. The Pope stayed up until dawn, following the news and praying, they said.

In the weeks that have followed, the Pope has had many more sleepless nights, it seems. According to officials at the Holy See, the Pontiff was deeply tormented by a war he feared could only serve to increase tensions in the Middle East, and possibly cause lasting harm to the delicate relationship between Christianity and Islam.

The latter prospect, in particular, was an appalling one to a Pope who has done more to foster bridge-building between the two religions than any previous incumbent of the pontifical throne. In the long weeks of the war itself, and in the others that have followed, the Vatican has stepped up efforts to head off such a crisis. Now, more than ever, the Holy See has taken pains to underline that the Gulf war was never a conflict between Christians and Muslims and that a solution to the problems of the Middle East can only be reached if people put aside their religious differences and work together.

Throughout the conflict itself, there was a to-ing and fro-ing of messages and visitors between the Vatican and the international Muslim community. The Holy See's diplomatic corps has long been recognised as one of the most effective in the world with its wide network of representatives, and its stamp of neutrality. When other embassies are forced to close, the Vatican's often stay open — during the Gulf war, the only Western diplomat to remain in Iraq was the papal nuncio, Polish-born Marian Oles who was able to send back detailed reports to the Pope.

"We were in touch with Muslim leaders all through this, trying to stop the conflict," said Father Thomas Michel, the American-born Jesuit priest who is the secretary for the Vatican's Commission for Relations with Muslims. "For us, Muslims are fellow believers in God, who may happen to be Egyptian, Palestinian or Iraqi," he added. "Muslim leaders are our friends and we wanted

the same things. Delegates would come here, and we would go there, and we exchanged letters. I myself was in Jordan just before Christmas for a Christian-Muslim meeting."

As the conflict raged, Pope John Paul urged Roman Catholics everywhere to donate money to the victims of the war and he himself set the wheels in motion for a programme to help refugees with food and medicine. The relief work will be carried out in cooperation with Muslim officials, says the Vatican.

Then, soon after the ceasefire was announced, the Pontiff summoned the Catholic leaders of all countries involved in the war to discuss how religious officials could help heal the wounds opened by the conflict. The three-day meeting brought together Western and Arab Christians — bishops from the United States, France, Britain, Belgium and Italy, and also the archbishops of Algeria, Iraq and Jerusalem, the spiritual leader of the Copts in Egypt and the patriarchs of Antiochia, representing the Melchite and Maronite Christians. From the Muslim leadership there was a message of support and encouragement in the form of a long letter from Hamid Algabid, secretary of the Organisation of Islamic Conference, the 45-member association generally recognised as being the most influential Islamic organisation in the world.

Addressing the group, Pope John Paul spoke of the need to "overcome rancors and cultural divisions, especially those created by different religious groups." He also discussed the war, the Palestinian problem and the situation in Lebanon. If these problems were not resolved, said the Pontiff, more conflicts would flare in the Middle East. Monsignor Jean-Louis Tauran, the Vatican's foreign minister, said the Gulf conflict risked deepening the divisions between what he described as "two worlds that are different culturally, and two universes that are different from a religious point of view."

Father Thomas Michel, who was also present at the meetings, says he is confident that the mini-synod and other initiatives involving both



Pope John Paul II

Christian and Islamic leaders, will prevent any lasting wounds from being opened between the two communities. "I'm far more optimistic than I was a month ago," he said. "Certainly, damage has been done. A lot of Muslims have felt for a long time that the West is out to destroy Islam and the presence of Western arms in some of the most holy areas of Islam, plus the war itself has confirmed this view in many Muslims' eyes. On the other hand, it has become clear with hindsight that the religious factor has played only a very small role in the war. From the beginning, Christian and Muslim leaders have been saying that it was not a religious war... I think a lot of the alarmism, that it would be impossible for Christians and Muslims to talk to each other again has been proved wrong. There is no evidence at all for this."

This American priest, who speaks fluent Arabic and is a graduate of Islamic studies, lived in Indonesia, Egypt, Turkey and Lebanon before taking up his post at the Vatican. Even as a young man, he says, he remained convinced that a bringing

together of the two faiths would be essential to world peace. "I decided it wouldn't be a bad idea to dedicate my own life to helping Christians and Muslims understand each other better," he said. Father Thomas has been helped in his goal by the determination of the Pope himself, he says. The Pontiff has made a point of visiting Muslim communities on his foreign travels, and he has been well received in Morocco, Pakistan, Indonesia, the Philippines, Turkey and in many African nations as well as by Muslim immigrants in France, Germany and Belgium. "The Pope has met Muslims groups more than 25 times in 12 years," said Father Thomas. "That is

more than all the popes in history put together, from the year zero up to 1980."

On the Palestinian issue, the Pope has often made his position clear, demanding an international peace conference to settle the issue. His sympathy for the Palestinian cause has done little to endear him to the international Jewish community, which has never forgiven the Vatican for failing to grant official recognition to Israel. In the early stages of the war, when Iraq aimed his first Scud missiles at the Jewish state, Rome's 30,000-strong Jewish community held demonstrations to protest the fact that the Pope had not mentioned Israel by name in his call for peace the following morning. The next time a missile landed, the Pontiff corrected the omission, but he also made a point of praying for the Iraqi victims of the war.

Father Thomas Michel describes the Pontiff's role in the war as strictly neutral, a fact, he says, which was much appreciated by Muslim leaders and which is emblematic of a significant change in Roman Catholic thinking. "Before the second Vatican Council, in 1965, Catholic Church was quite judgmental, not only towards Muslims, but towards anyone who was not part of the Roman Catholic Church — Protestants, Jews and Muslims included," said Father Thomas. "They were considered heretics or pagans or something that was not worthy of respect and esteem." The present Pope has taken up the official change in policy, and done his best to turn it into a reality, he adds. The challenge has been well received by the Muslim community, which has proved equally enthusiastic about the new dialogue. "We don't want to give the impression that it's

just been the Christians," said Father Thomas. "A lot of the initiatives have come from Muslim leaders."

For Father Thomas, one major stumbling block to an improved relationship remains the Christian fear and obsession with the threat of so-called Muslim fundamentalism. "People talk about Islamic fundamentalism, but I don't think they know what it is," he said. "I think it's become a journalistic cliché to describe anything about Islam which bothers the West. I think it is really one of the great problems of our time, this tremendous slander of Islam. It's blatantly ignorant."

Another issue that needs to be tackled is the treatment of Christians in the Muslim World, and especially in some parts of the Middle East. During the three-day meeting at the Vatican to discuss the implications of the Gulf war, Iraqi Archbishop Bidawid voiced fears that anti-Western feeling could lead to persecution for the 700,000 Christians living in the country. "There is a risk that we will be forced to suffer new oppression, if not from the government itself, at least from Islamic public opinion," he said.

Recently, the Pope has spoken more insistently of his wish to visit the Middle East's most troubled spot and probably the point of greatest Christian-Muslim tension — Lebanon — though for the moment, there are no definite plans. He has also reiterated his hope that one day soon he may be able to go to Jerusalem, though he has made it clear that before he visits he wants it to be given an independent status and declared a city sacred to the three great faiths of Islam, Christianity and Judaism.

Meanwhile, in the small Umbrian town of Assisi, leaders and followers of all three of those religions have been making their own efforts to narrow the divides between the communities. During a day of peace, nearly 400 Muslims, Jews and Christians staged a 5-kilometre walk to St. Francis Basilica where they prayed and sang together in Arabic, Hebrew and Italian. Assisi's Bishop Sergio Goretti, who organised the gathering, reminded the audience that believers of all three groups were descendants of Abraham. "God is the father of everyone," he told them. "He can't take sides. Every time we try and use Him against someone else, we're committing the gravest of sins against Him" — World News Link.

Book Review

Unholy mess

Unholy Babylon: The secret History of Saddam's War

By Adel Darwish and Gregory Alexander Gollancz, London 1991, £9.99

For a book to be worthwhile, it should include new or better information, or fresh interpretations of existing information; and it should be accurate. It helps, moreover, if it is well written. Unholy Babylon manifestly and dismally fails on all these counts.

The book is intended to provide the background to the crisis sparked by Iraq's August 1990 invasion of Kuwait. It has three main parts: a brief history of Iraq and its victim; a review of Iraq's military procurement and industrialisation efforts; and a section covering the nature of Saddam's regime and the events leading up to the invasion.

The key themes are well worn: That the West hypocritical, greedy and short-sighted in backing Saddam during his eight-year war with Iran; that this support, combined with Washington's failure to warn him against invading Kuwait, encouraged Saddam to imagine that he could swallow his southern neighbour with impunity; and that the West and its Middle Eastern allies should have anticipated the attack. In a book purporting to offer a "secret history" of the confrontation and "startling revelations," however, the lack of any secrets, or even any startling new analysis, is a profound disappointment. In large measure, this is a cuttings job. In itself, there is nothing wrong with that. But this is not even a competent cutting job. Time and again, the authors rely on flawed information.

They cite, for example, the September 1989 front page story in the Independent claiming that the solid fuel plant for Iraq's Condor 2 ballistic missile had been destroyed in a huge explosion. There was indeed an explosion; but it was not at a fuel plant. It was at the Qaqa Establishment, a munitions plant at Latifiya.

It is far from being the only major blunder. "During the first half of 1988," we are told, "the Egyptians supplied the Iraqis with approximately 16 prototype Condor 2s for test launches against Iranian targets. These were reported to have reached ranges of between 675 and 1,000 km, carrying payloads of 500 kg." Those knowledgeable on the Condor 2 project are aware of only one prototype, which was built in Iraq, lacks a reliable guidance system, and has certainly never been fired.

Where accurate cuttings have been used, the authors certainly draw heavily from them. Consider the following, from a June 1989 article (by the present reviewer) on an Iraqi missile project. "In 1986 an Ifat representative approached a Vienna engineering consultancy, Consultco, with a proposal for a project in Iraq known as DOT. Working closely on the project with Ifat was another Austrian consultancy, Feneberg of Graz..."

With neither shame nor attribution, Darwish and Alexander tell us that: "In 1986 an Ifat Corporation representative approached the Vienna-based company Consultco about a project in Iraq code-named DOT. Another firm of consultants already cooperating with Ifat Corporation was the Austrian firm Feneberg, based in Graz..."

It is by no means the only such case. In the pre-publication issue of the book sent to reviewers, four pages of a potted chronology of Iraq are lifted, verbatim and without attribution, from the far more worthy Republic of Fear by Samir Al-Khalil, published in 1989.

As if all this were not enough, the book is also notably short on style. In the chapter on the Iraqi "supergun," we are told that the gun's designer, Dr. Gerry Bull, in 1968 registered his Space Research Corporation in Delaware "financing it with capital raised from commercial contacts." Anyone with a mortgage, let alone a "supergun" company, will remember having done much the same. Earlier, in a section dealing with Baghdad's nuclear weapons programme, the authors confide: "The engineering of nuclear warheads is not a simple process."

Quite so. And neither is the preparation of a book worth reading — Middle East International.

By Alan George

THOUGHTS FOR THIS WEEK

Self conquest is the greatest of victories
— Plato, Greek philosopher (about 427 B.C.-347 B.C.)

We think according to nature. We speak according to rules.
We act according to custom
— Francis Bacon, English writer (1561-1626)

Bad laws are the worst sort of tyranny
— Edmund Burke, Irish-born statesman (1729-1797)

The rights of sheep

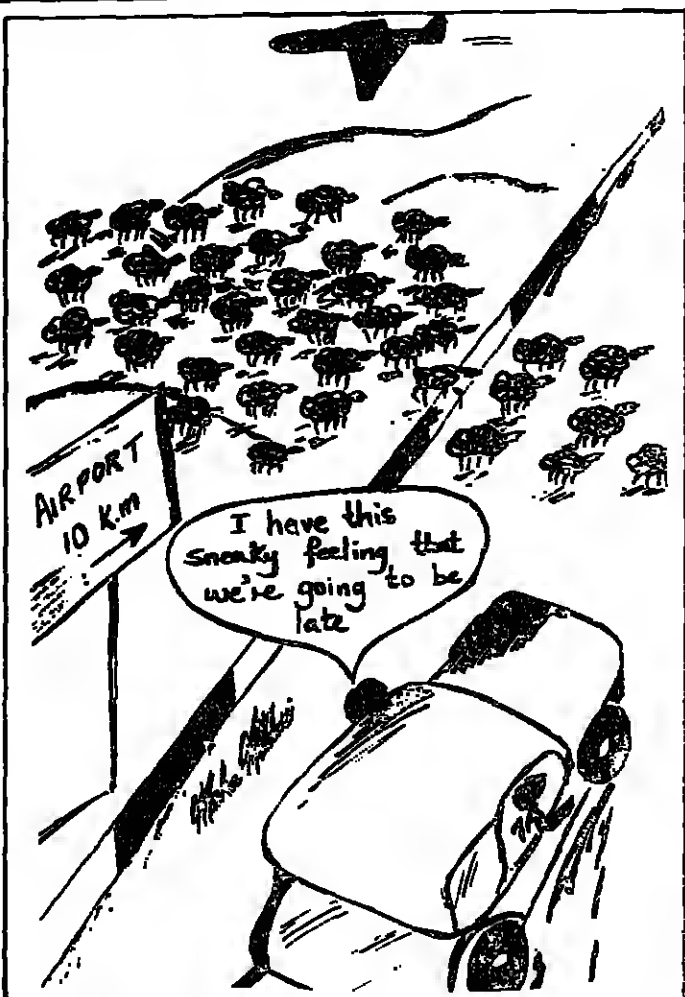
By Maha Addasi

Spring is finally here, people are in better spirits and less grouchy than they were in winter. Flowers are blooming, butterflies are multiplying, and the grass is finally green. Things could not be better, except for one thing. People just can't stop complaining about one thing or another. Would you believe they are now complaining about sheep crossing the street. Those poor, helpless, cute, woolly, peace-loving, soon-to-be-slaughtered creatures can no longer cross a congested, rut-filled, highway during rush-hour without somebody complaining about it. My question is what do people have against those poor beings? Is it not enough that their lives are short? Is it not enough, I say, that people milk them (literally) of their energy, and shepherds prod them with their, nasty canes whenever they attempt to lie down in the middle of that very congested road, and dip them in disinfectant, and brand them with those awful looking red, or blue dyes?

Life is too short for a sheep so why, I ask, do people complain when sheep relieve themselves on the side-walks wherever and whenever they please? Why do people complain when they take a forty-five minute walk up some 864 difficult-to-climb steps to a certain relic in Petra only to find that some sheep have found their way there first and have left behind a few-too-many odour emitting pieces of —? Why do these people then grumble, rush and find themselves at ground-level in seconds: instead of taking yet another 45 minutes to get down.

Why, I ask? Don't sheep have feelings too? Can't sheep live those few months in their lives without people suggesting that special side-walks be made for them so that fewer road accidents happen? Can't these sheep, poor souls, roam where they please instead of having allocated areas restricting where they graze? Why don't people just let sheep be, and let them pass between houses eat the garbage and fertilise, and "weed" back yards?

So ladies and gentlemen in reader land, I am presenting this sheep case to you so you can judge fairly. Please don't be too hard on them. Some people can be extremely mean and pick on these defenceless, do-what-you-please-with-me animals.



Would you believe, these people do not even leave sheep alone even after they have been slaughtered. Because that is when they start complaining about meat prices! Indeed I am utterly outraged with this attitude.

Man without a country

By E. Yaghi

In the distant desert horizon, thick fumes of black smoke mounted up into the invisible sky, forming a dense cloud that hung over the tiny country of Kuwait shutting out the morning sun. Ahmad the principal sat in front of his house, face sunk in his hands staring with frustration at the massive dark clouds beyond him. Beads of sweat formed on his forehead and began to drip down his face and gather in a pool at the nape of his neck. His gray hair stood in matted tufts and his gray eyes tried to contemplate an uncertain future.

"I have lived in Kuwait all my life," he said to himself. "I have given the best years of my existence teaching Kuwaiti boys and girls. I have no country of my own to seek refuge in and now I am being persecuted simply because I happened to be born Palestinian. This is the legacy I am handing down to my children! We are a people without a country."

His young son cautiously opened the door of their house, tiptoed out and flung his arm over his father's shoulder. "Daddy, when can we go back to school? Are you going to be principal again or will we have to leave and go somewhere else?"

"I'm afraid Nabeel that we have nowhere else to go and who knows if I'll even be able to teach here in Kuwait, much less get my old job back as principal," he said as he hugged his son. "Time will tell my boy. We've suffered through the Iraqi occupation. As you know, we didn't run away as so many of our friends did. We faced the horrible Gulf war because again, we had no place to go and there was no choice," he continued as he pulled the child onto his lap and buried his head in Nabeel's curls.

"Daddy, did the war really stop at last? The boy asked. "Will we have peace now? At night I wake up and hear people screaming! Why? What's wrong?"

"Ah, my son, those are Palestinians like us that Kuwaitis round up like herds of animals for questioning. God knows what they do to them, but I've heard many terrible stories." He then pushed his son off his lap saying, "you'd better go inside now. Tell your mother I'm going to see a friend of mine and that I'll be back later."

Nabeel ran inside and Ahmad rose, tucked his shirt in his pants and set off for his friend's house. On his way, rough sand sifted between his toes. The air smelled like burning rubber. By now, the beads of sweat on his forehead had turned into rivulets. He took out his handkerchief and mopped away at his neck and forehead but after a few seconds, new beads reappeared. Normally, he would have driven his car to his friend's house, but today he had no petrol and no hope of getting any soon because he was born a Palestinian and not Kuwaiti.

"But I had nothing to do with the Iraqi invasion," he told himself. "I did not collaborate with the Iraqis or with anybody and the Gulf war wasn't my fault. My family and I are innocent. Nabeel is only a child. Is he considered guilty too? My five daughters are still students. What is their guilt? My wife has suffered more than all of us because she is responsible for the care of each. She spends ninety per cent of her day in the kitchen and has no time for thoughts of treason. Why are we all being punished? All my friends and people I know are innocent too. Yet, Palestinians suffer banishment wherever they go. A people without a country. Oh that America was as

ferocious in getting our country back for us as it was in 'liberating' Kuwait! There is no justice for my people!" Ahmad plowed ahead, his head bent deep in thought. He didn't see the car heading straight for him. Confusion and defeat gripped his mind while his body moved automatically like a robot. Perhaps the Kuwaiti driver meant no harm. Perhaps he was someone seeking vengeance. The American made car barreled down the street as fast as a jet and struck Ahmad, throwing him several metres away from the impact. The last thing he remembered was sinking into unconsciousness in a pool of blood.

Much later, with an assortment of tubes attached to his body and an array of bandages and plaster wrapped around incisions and breaks, Ahmad awoke propped up on a hospital bed. He squinted, trying to focus and understand where he was and what had happened to him. Standing near him was a woman dressed in white so he whispered with great effort; "Where am I? What happened?"

The nurse answered, "you are lucky to be alive. You were found unconscious in the street, sir. A car hit you and then drove away. No one knows who the driver was. Witnesses were unable to identify him. Don't try to talk too much. You need to rest. We've contacted your wife. She should be here soon," and she went on to fluff his pillow and straighten his sheets before attending to the next patient.

Still dazed, Ahmad sunk back into anesthesia. He awoke again when his tearful wife rushed into his room, frantic with worry. "Thank God you're alive!" She said as her eyes swept over her husband's tubes and bandages. "You'll be alright, God willing, I've seen the doctor. You've got some broken bones and because you had internal bleeding you had some surgery. But within a week or so, you should be feeling better."

"Why are we being punished? How will we pay the hospital bill? It would have been better if I died. There is nothing left to live for," he rasped.

Enraged at his condition, at their situation, his wife screamed, "You have everything to live for! Did you forget our only son Nabeel? And your daughters, who will take care of them? Shall we live at the mercy of our relatives? If they might give us money once, they won't give us money twice. We can't live or depend on the charity of others. We need you to get well, to live, to come home!"

He ignored her outburst. "What about my friend Ali? Did you tell him what happened to me? Tell him to come and see me."

He saw the expression on his wife's face change from rage to sorrow. She said in a low voice, "Ali's dead. His wife doesn't even know where he's buried. He was tortured to death and his inquisitors threw him in some unmarked grave. At least you're still alive."

Ahmad could not control himself any longer. He broke down and cried and his salty tears fell in blotches on his bloodstained bandages. His body shook with pain, hurt and disgust. His wife called the nurse who ran to get him a tranquiliser to drug out his misery for the time being. But what about Ahmad's tomorrow? How long will he have to pay the price for being born a Palestinian? He is a man without a country.

JTV CHANNEL 2 WEEKLY PREVIEW

Thursday, May 2

8:30 Day By Day

The Age Of Dinosaurs

Ross is teaching the children about dinosaurs and believes himself to be a good children's teacher, but his parents think otherwise.

9:10 Black Forest Clinic

Prol. Bregmann goes on vacation with nurse Crystal and Dr. Elena, Bregmann's ex-girlfriend has a car accident and dies before he arrives.

10:00 News in English

10:20 Movie Of The Week

Parrish

Young man Parrish rejects his stepfather's business dealings, and sets out to make it on his own, honestly.

Friday, May 3

8:30 Night Court

9:10 Shakespeare

10:00 News in English

10:20 Bergerac

Ice Maiden

A famous diamond thief arrive on the island with the

obvious aim of stealing the diamond auction, Bergerac warns her not to try anything foolish, but she does it anyway.

Saturday, May 4

8:30 Good Morning Miss Bliss

Miss Bliss asks an old retired teacher friend to do some teaching at school, and although she doesn't like his method of teaching the students approve of him.

9:00 Encounter

10:00 News in English

10:20 Feature Film

Sunday, May 5

8:30 Mother And Son

The Aunt

When Arthur is getting ready to receive his aunt, his mother is getting ready to receive a royalty.

9:10 All Our Children

Making Music

This time the documentary discusses how children develop their musical talents in different world cultures.

10:00 News in English

10:20 Paradise

Honour Bound

Ethan's struggle to help the poor farmers from the bad rich farmers continues.

Monday, May 6

8:30 Empty Nest

The doctor is having problems with his nurse. So she quits her job and teaches him a lesson in positive cooperation.

9:10 Inside Story

Paula is beginning to realise that John is not abiding by his profession's ethics.

10:00 News in English

10:20 Derrick

It would seem that Munich still suffers from gangsters making a living from imposition of their protection on businesses. Derrick wants to stop this.

Tuesday, May 7

8:30 Perfect Strangers

The Sunshine Boys

Larry meets an idol friend

of his and decides to become part of his coterie, but he is in for a surprise.

9:10 Costeau

Heron Of The Single Flight This time Costeau takes us to New Zealand islands and the usual scientific study continues.

10:00 News in English

10:20 Columbo

Wednesday, May 8

8:30 After Henry

Upstagers

Sarah joins an amateur drama group and so does everyone in the family.

9:10 Our House

A Point Of View

A female wants to become a member in a club exclusive for men. Guss refuses, but she doesn't give up.

10:00 News in English

10:20 Behaving Badly

Seize The Day

Freda cannot live with Brigitte and the black priest turns her down.

LETTERS

Dear Sir,

The Australian Friendship Centre would welcome interest from your readers.

We are a penfriend, import-export, travel, business, migration centre and we would like to hear from all Jordanians who are interested.

Would you please publish our address in your newspaper, so that Jordanians can contact us?

We have members in 49 countries and we would like the Middle East to be better represented.

Thanking you, I remain,

Yours sincerely,

Dermot Corwell C.D.
Commissioner for Declarations
P.O. Box 376, Wembley 6014
Western Australia.

Dear Sir,

Sincere greetings from Germany!

Since a very long time I have been looking for a good pen-friend in your nice country. I think you know how difficult it is to get here in central Europe an address from your country. And so I will use the chance to ask you if you can do me a favour. Please be so kind and print my address in your newspaper.

I am male, 27 years of age. I work in a big pharmaceutical factory as manager for Im-Export. I am single. I have

many hobbies. I collect stamps, banknotes, view-cards and stationery. I like travelling, listening music, foreign languages, foreign countries with their different races and cultures.

I hope that you can help me.

With best regards,

Yours sincerely,

Holger Kauffold
P.O. Box: 4624
D-4800 Bielefeld 1
Germany

Dear Sirs,

Please publish my name and address in your newspaper.

My name and address is as follows:

Dr. John Abbott
7954 Transit Road
Suite 114-M20
Williamsville, New York 14221
U.S.A.

I am planning to visit the Middle East on holiday later this year and would very much like to have Jordanian friends. I am 34, enjoy water sports, travel and collecting stamps and telephone cards.

Thank you

Dr. John Abbott

B.C.

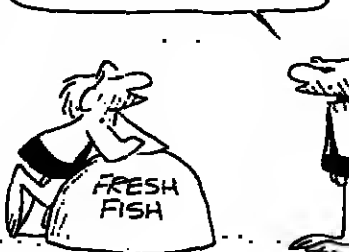
WOULD YOU SEE THAT MY MOM GETS THIS NOTE?



YOU'VE GOT A MOM?



SOB... AND A WIFE AND 3 KIDS.



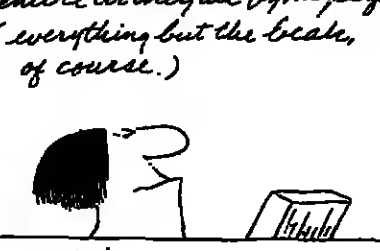
WHYTA YA GOT THAT CANT TALK?



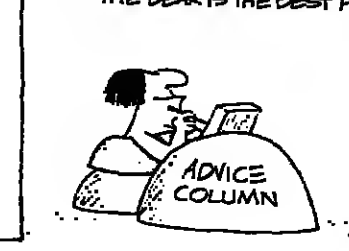
Dear Fat Broad,



I went berserk this Thanksgiving and ate an entire turkey all by myself. (everything but the bones, of course.)



YOU SHOULD BE ASHAMED OF YOURSELF! THE BEAK IS THE BEST PART.



Egyptian film-maker steers a daring course

By Kati Sabat

CAIRO — A screaming crowd is storming the government store. Rocks start flying, smashing windows. The old manager, scared to death, flees into the countryside in a hail of stones. He falls to the ground, blood flowing from his head.

The scene is over, but the actor does not get up. The blood covering his face and head is real. It will be a while before he is back on his feet.

The real-life atmosphere of the movie set went to the head of one of the local inhabitants, an extra in the movie. In the heat of the action, the villager had picked

up a real stone and hurled it at the actor. To director Salah Abu Seif, one of Egypt's veteran and best known film-makers, the incident is just part of the course. part of the price to pay for a result that is as true to life as life itself.

At 76, Salah Abu Seif is back on track, filming in Fayoum, a large oasis some 120 kilometres from Cairo. With some 40 films to his credit, Abu Seif was lured back into the director's chair by the prospect of adapting a novel by the writer Youssef El Kaied, *Man From The Delta*, for the screen. Equally exciting was the fact that after a break of some 10

years, he would again be working with international star Omar Sharif, who returned to his native land to make the film.

Everything is running smoothly on the set. Abu Seif, strong-looking and serene, is hard to pick out among the dozens of busy technicians and the hundreds of villagers who have been recruited for the movie. Rightly considered one of the Middle East's best film-makers, Abu Seif is calm and reflective amid the bustle. He never raises his voice, and often a mere sign of the hand is enough for people to jump and get things done.

With a career spanning some 55 years in the movie business, Abu Seif commands respect from everyone who comes into contact with him. His beginnings were humble — he started as a film studio "gofer" — but from the beginning, Abu Seif knew what he wanted: to direct. This ambition sprang from a book that he had read when he was 12, which made him give up the idea of becoming an actor. "I still remember a sentence that said: 'If you see someone on the set who is just sitting and thinking, don't think it is someone who has got nothing to do, because this is the person who decides everything. This is the person who is making the film, this is the boss.'"

"I liked that person immediately," recalls Abu Seif, "and I decided then and there I wanted to become a director." A natural choice, it seems, for the born leader he is. Creative, energetic, a good organiser, Abu Seif has always known how to galvanise and draw the talent out of the actors who work with him.

That is not to say that things have always been easy, particularly in the early days

of his career. Although he had already directed a number of successful films, Abu Seif met a stonewall of resistance when he tried to get a producer for his first "real-life drama" movie, the first in the history of the Egyptian cinema. "The Day Of Revenge, inspired by the novel *Therese Raquin* by French novelist Emile Zola did not convince the producers of the day, who favoured almost exclusively romantic pictures. It was back in the 1950s and Abu Seif was ahead of his time. The "neo-realism" movement in the Italian cinema was in its infancy.

Abu Seif sold his car and his wife's jewellery and made the movie. A resounding success that won critical acclaim and the admiration of a public who for the first time saw life as it really is up on the silver screen, in a film with which they themselves, the inhabitants of the back streets, could identify.

The movie marked a turning point in the history of the Egyptian cinema and was the first in a long series of works that now serves as a yardstick against which others are measured in Middle Eastern cinema. The new generation of directors, among them Khairy Bishara and Mohammad Khan, took their cue from Abu Seif, whose appreciation of their work remains somewhat guarded: "I feel these young directors are sometimes excessive in their quest for realism and end up giving us what amounts to a quintessential picture of misery, vice, or crime. But real life is not like that. There is always a sunny side to the darkest street. And if there isn't an obvious solution, it is best to leave the outcome open," he says.

In his current film, realism is certainly present — if only because of its uncanny tim-

ing. It tells the story of the mayor of a village, played by Omar Sharif, who "buys" the son of a poor villager in order to send him to the war front instead of his own son. In the context of recent world events, the movie is a strong reminder that while some may benefit from war, others pay for it with their blood. Says the director: "I had been thinking about Al Kaied's book for quite a while, but I found the story so harsh that I hesitated. It was the producer who persuaded me to do it."

This is not the first time Abu Seif has made a film about war. Between 1979 and 1981 he was in Iraq working on the first part of a trilogy on three battles of the Islamic conquests. Abu Seif has fond memories of the time he spent in Iraq, just before the outbreak of the Iran-Iraq war. "At the time, the country seemed to be booming. The people of Iraq were happy, signs of prosperity were everywhere and it was not hard to imagine that given ten years, the country would have been one of the most developed in the region." The war with Iran put an end to all that, and to the trilogy; he was never able to film the second part.

Today, Abu Seif prefers to think of how pleasant it is to be working with Omar Sharif, one of his favourite actors, who agreed to play the role of the mayor in the film. For the international star, best known for his roles as an inveterate seducer, this is no ordinary character to play. Wrapped in the traditional wide black "abaya" cape, with jet black hair and moustache, Sharif is almost unrecognisable. As he moves about the set, though, the character he portrays is unmistakable: Brutal, selfish, violent, domineering — a man who is



Egyptian film-maker Salah Abu Seif on the set of his latest movie with actor Ezzat Al Alailah.

used to having both the members of his family and of the village bow before his authority.

"Omar is just as I had remembered," says the veteran director, "a real professional who gives his character everything he's got, regardless of danger or a potentially embarrassing situation..."

Thirty years of life as an international celebrity have not changed him one bit." Speaking of his future plans, Abu Seif announces that the time has finally come for him to make an old project come true. For close to 20 years he has been banned by the censorship authorities from making a movie on what has long been considered a taboo subject: sexuality. Explains the director: "The film deals with incompatibility and sexual discord between a couple. Such problems are the cause of 90 per cent of divorces in eastern society. Although there are specific provisions in the Koran that say that it is a man's duty to think of his wife's pleasure as

well as his own, men in our society have a very selfish approach when it comes to the act which should express the essence of what love is. Psychologically, this is the source of misery which in most cases either makes life unbearable or leads to the breakdown of the marriage."

Such a delicate issue is going to require all the diplomacy and skill of the seasoned director he is. "It is as though there has been a conspiracy for centuries to surround this issue with an impenetrable veil of silence. Even the two main actors I chose to play the central characters — Yehia Al Fakhrani and Yousra — hesitated for ages before agreeing to deal with an issue that is still a huge taboo in the eyes of the general public."

"It took me 19 years to extract a go-ahead from the censorship authorities, and I think that the fact that I have finally got it is a very encouraging sign for the future of the Egyptian cinema," he exults.

Part of the reason for Abu Seif's optimism is what he sees as new opportunities for the growing independence of Egyptian film-makers. Until recently, most were forced to rely almost exclusively on financing from abroad and were therefore obliged to tailor productions to fit various requirements.

Despite such restrictions, Abu Seif has always managed to express himself and his ideas through the adaptable vehicle that is humour. Explains the director: "The subject of my last film, *Al Bidaya* (The Beginning) was democracy, and accuracy, the only way I could deal with such a serious issue was to treat it with effect. Al Bidaya was awarded the prestigious 'Charlie Chaplin Gold Stick' prize at the Vevey Festival of Comic Film in Switzerland. The award, one of many Abu Seif has earned in his long career, is another encouragement for the veteran film-maker to break new ground again — World News Link.



In a departure from many of his previous romantic roles, Omar Sharif plays the part of a domineering and brutal mayor in Abu Seif's adaptation of the novel *Man From The Delta*.

What's next for Stones? Movie for Mick, album from Keith

By Larry McShane
The Associated Press

NEW YORK — What is it that keeps the Rolling Stones going? Keith Richards isn't sure.

"It's kind of mysterious, and probably has to stay that way," says Richards, the guitar-playing half of the glimmer twins. "You can get together the best musicians for their instruments, but it's not necessarily a good band. Somehow, I think it's a mysterious thing, a good band."

Based on the huge 18-month "steel wheels" tour, Richards is convinced that the Stones — 28 years and "millions of changes" later — are a great band. Not that he ever doubted it.

"The boys are still rockin'." For me, it was great, because I knew they had it in 'em. And I know there's more, and I'm gonna wring it out of 'em," said Richards in an interview promoting the Stones' fifth live album, *Flashpoint*.

While Richards was surprised at how good the new record sounded, he's not a big fan of live albums. "A lot of the material is the same as on most of the others. What do you call it? The best versions yet? Live albums have always been kind of weird to me," said the guitarist.

Not surprisingly, Mick Jagger — Richards' verbal sparring partner through the late '60s — disagrees.

"It shows where the band was at live. Records are very much an artificial medium in a lot of ways ... They're just so tied up with technology, and they always have been. They don't sound like a band playing in a club," said Jagger, in a telephone interview from Atlanta.

What's Jagger doing in



Mick Jagger

Georgia? "Acting, dah-ling," he vamped. Specifically, Mick is playing a villain in the film *Free Jack*, a futuristic adventure starring Emilio Estevez and Anthony Hopkins.

Back to music. Jagger and Richards agreed that *Flashpoint* is no farewell from live performances by the Stones. "No, not really," Jagger said. "A live album is always a bit in the cards every time we do a big tour."

Everyone in the band is getting along well these days.

All five — Jagger, Richards, drummer Charlie Watts, bassist Bill Wyman and guitarist Ron Wood — showed up at various times during the mixing of *Flashpoint*. And don't read anything into Wyman's absence from the video for their current single, *High Wire*.

Wyman wouldn't come to the video shoot in Brooklyn because of a fear of flying. "Really," that's what he told me," Jagger said, laughing. "He was in a terrible state on the tour, driving around Europe. It's strange.

because he never had anything like it before."

Jagger also said Wyman's 594-page book on the band, *Stone Alone*, didn't make it to his required reading list.

"I read little bits in the papers, Rolling Stone magazine. I must say I couldn't read the whole book. It's too big. Let's hope that a decent interval is allowed to pass before the next one, give people a bit of time to digest the first," Jagger said.

The Stones, for the first time, included a pair of studio cuts on a live album. In addition to *High Wire*, a rocking indictment of arms dealers recorded as the Gulf war broke out, there's the funky *Sex Drive*.

"It's our little bats off to James Brown. It's a tip of the hat to James, especially since he's out of jail, a little celebration of that," said Richards.

Flashpoint also includes Eric Clapton playing with the band on *Little Red Rooster*. "We go back a long way, but he'd never actually appeared with us on a record," explained Jagger. "We did a great version of 'Brown Sugar' in the studio with Eric a long, long time ago. I don't remember what the purpose of that was anymore."

The Stones plan on taking 1991 off as a band, although Richards said he plans to reorganise his X-pensive Winos group and do another solo record. The Stones are also working on getting a new record deal. Beyond that, Jagger is tight-lipped: "I'm better off keeping my mouth shut."

Richards — surprise — is not.

"I wouldn't be surprised at getting a new Stones record at least next year, and when there's a record, we'll probably be on the road, too," he said. Anything could happen."

By Patrick Olivier

PARIS — Numerous television programmes, devoted to the cinema, present it as a has-been and surround it with an aura of melancholy. How beautiful and great the cinema used to be, with its actors of stature and its brilliant directors, with all the passions in its wake, and, above all, Hollywood, all hope lay in the fascination of Marlene, Humphrey's mannerisms and Minnelli-style direction.

But the cinema is not dead and, if were the case, then death is not doing so badly. Not only were there some remarkable films in 1990, but these same films drew crowds to the auditoriums.

Big productions such as Jean-Paul Rappeneau's *Cyrano De Bergerac* with Gérard Depardieu, and Claude Berri's *Uranus* starring the same Depardieu, were unanimously acclaimed by the critics and are acknowledged as masterpieces worthy of passing into posterity. *Cyrano* alone has been nominated for each of the thirteen César awards of French cinema. It is an absolute record.

Like several others, these films are a great hit. *Uranus*, which has not been out very long, has already had 2 million admissions in a month. 4 million people have been to see *Cyrano*. The two films based on Marcel Pagnol's works *La Gloire De Mon Père* and *Le Château De Ma Mère* have also been very successful. The former has achieved 6 million admissions and the latter has so far reached 3 million. Whereas in 1989, the American cinema monopolised nine of the top ten films, this year, it has to make do with just *The Dead Poets Society* (6.4 million spectators) and *Pretty Woman* which has started on a brilliant career with 1.8 million admissions in the space of a few weeks.

For the first time in several years, the French cinema is master on its own market. The reason is that the French cinema has also managed to produce big budget films which are alone able to coun-

Cinema 90 — a return in full strength

The cinema is going downhill. That seems to be the general consensus. It is gradually being undermined by television. Yet, the 1990 cinema season in France was a great success, with excellent films and full auditoriums. What is the explanation?



Gerard Depardieu

ter television. A social comedy *Tatie Danielle* and a detective comedy *Ripoux Contre Ripoux* also stand out with 2 and 3 million admissions. A big spy film by Luc Besson with Yves Montand who has made a comeback to films, *Nikita*, which has recently come out, has already been seen by 3 million spectators.

New chances

Even more special films, which the public is not expected to rush to see, are distinguishing themselves. This is the case with *La Discrete* by the new director Christian Vincent, with 350,000 spectators, *La Vengeance d'Une Femme* by Jacques Doillon, *Le Conte De Printemps* by the very classical Eric Rohmer and *La*

Captive Du Désert by the very personal Raymond Depardon.

Generally speaking, the demanding cinema also appears to have been successful in France for foreign films which, it is true, presented some fine surprises: from Japan: *The Sting Of Death* by Kohji Oguri or the brand new *Profound Desire Of The Gods* by Imamura. From the Soviet Union, *Don't Move*, *Die, Resuscitate* by Vitali Kanevski and *Taxi Blues* by Pavel Lounguine. The Maghreb is represented by *Ferd Boughedir* with Hal-faouine and Africa by *Lobrisa Ouedraogo* with *Tilai*. All these films off the beaten track and away from advertising aroused real curiosity and filled the auditoriums.

As the films for the general

public have given themselves a new chance with big-scale productions, low budget "author's cinema" has also found the way to success. This is due to its quality which has turned out to be profitable. It draws the cultivated public which is attracted today by the discovery of a new film-maker as by a new painter.

If 1990 saw great films making a place for themselves and the number of cinema-goers on the increase, the future seems to be very promising: Chabrol's new film *Madame Bovary*, and *Vin Gogh*, the latest film by Fialat (who was awarded the Palme d'or in Cannes for his *Journal d'un Curé De Campagne*), with, unexpectedly, Jacques Dutronc in the starring rôle (although it is true that he is the favourite actor of Zulaewski and his abysses) are due out soon.

The great foreign directors are also working on their coming films: Coppola, Woody Allen, Kurosawa and Wim Wenders, not forgetting Federico Fellini. They will soon be showing on the French screens.

Besides the quality of the films presented, there is a more prosaic but equally effective reason for the upturn in cinema frequentation. The network of auditoriums in France has been completely rethought. Cinema managers, faced with the fall in the number of cinema-goers, in the last few years, have revised their strategy with a redeployment of auditoriums towards easily accessible districts (particularly in Paris), technical and aesthetic renovation aimed at providing comfort and a pleasant atmosphere but also at restoring the "temples of cinema" to their former glory, and a reorganisation of time schedules and prices (the 6 p.m. performance costing only 18 francs, a prelude to a "real night on the town" at a modest price). All this has contributed to making the public once again want to be carried away by the magic of cinema. Just like in the past — *L'Actualité En France*.

Researchers identify genes that govern smell

By Paul Raeburn
The Associated Press

NEW YORK — Biologists have discovered a family of genes that may explain why a rose by any name would smell as sweet.

They have identified what they believe are 18 of the genes that enable the nose to latch on to the fragrant oils of the rose and distinguish them from tens of thousands of other smells.

"It's a bombshell," said Charles Wysocki of the Monell Chemical Senses Centre in Philadelphia. "It's something that was not expected for many years."

A report of the discovery, by Linda Buck and Richard Axel of Columbia University, appeared Friday in the journal *Cell*.

"Those molecules will serve as useful tools," said Buck, for solving a variety of important scientific and practical problems.

Buck said the discovery could be the first step toward understanding how the brain's nerve cells are wired together. It also could have practical applications in such areas as insect control, she said.

Strong-smelling substances called pheromones play a role in insect behavior and reproduction, she said. "How those substances are detected would lead to new means of inhibiting reproduction, for example."

Before this study, researchers had disagreed about whether smell was governed by a very few genes or a large number. The study suggests that 100 to 200 genes may be involved, Buck and Axel said.

"The number of genes, if it holds up to be true, is phenomenal," said Wysocki, an

authority on the biology and psychology of smell. "It makes it now one of the largest related families of genes that's been identified."

He said the research is "literally going to open up whole new fields. It's going to draw people who never even thought of doing work with the sense of smell."

Odors are detected by tiny tubular extensions on nerve cells high in the nasal cavity, Buck said. Those extensions, called cilia, are believed to be the location of molecules called receptors. Odor molecules are believed to slip into certain receptors as a key slips into a lock.

The newly identified genes are almost certain to carry the blueprints for those receptors, Buck said. Experiments now in progress are expected to confirm that, she said.

Isolation of the genes and determination of their genetic code will allow researchers to construct laboratory cultures of cells that can detect, or "smell," a single odor or group of odors, Buck said.

"We want to answer very basic questions about how a sensory system receives information," Buck said.

"My idea was if you could identify the receptors for odors you would have a way of knowing what was sent by individual neurons," to the brain, she said.

"And if you could follow the connections into the brain ... you might see patterns of connections that would allow you to understand the logic of the connections."

The genes were identified using a technique called polymerase chain reaction, or PCR, which allows researchers to remove minute quantities of the genetic material DNA for study.

Antibiotics — in poor countries, it is hard to say no

By Jon Miller

LOS BANOS, The Philippines — Her 10-year-old son had a nagging cough, so Lillian Ocampo took an afternoon off work and brought the boy to a clinic in a neighboring town. The doctor, working fast, prescribed a week's worth of antibiotics and charged 15 pesos (about U.S. 50 cents) for the consultation. Ocampo, a Filipino high school graduate raising six children on a maid's salary, bought two days' supply of the expensive medicine. In a day her son was better.

A week later, the boy's 1-year-old brother started to cough. Rather than return to the doctor simply to receive the same instructions, Ocampo went back to the pharmacy and bought some more of the antibiotic. Again the coughing stopped after a day.

The children are now fine. Neither relapsed, nor died. Compared to most stories of childhood in the developing world, this sounds like a happy one, a small triumph for thrift and common sense. But it isn't.

Antimicrobials, a variety of drugs which include antibiotics, are overused to an alarming degree in developing countries, health experts say. The result is uncountable sums of wasted money, an explosion in resistant strains of harmful bacteria, and the unnecessary exposure of millions of people — especially children — to the risk of serious side-effects.

"Antimicrobials are definitely indicated for many, many infections, and they are certainly lifesaving in many instances," says Dr. Mediadora Saniel, director of the Research Institute for Tropical Medicine outside Manila. "The problem is that probably in the majority of instances, antimicrobials are prescribed either for an illness which is not an infection or for an infection for which the treatment is not an anti-

biotic.

"I would say that more than 80 per cent of coughs are viral, which means they don't respond to antibiotics," she adds. "That also goes for sore throats and colds. For these illnesses, antibiotics just don't make any sense — in fact they're dangerous."

Ocampo's case illustrates several of the problems surrounding the misuse of antibiotics. The first is self-medication. Without medical training, Ocampo, who knows several antibiotics by name, couldn't possibly identify the cause of her baby's cough, let alone the appropriate medicine to cure it. But visiting a doctor is expensive and time-consuming, and Ocampo felt certain that the baby's cough was the same as that of his older brother.

The second problem concerns the drugstore where Ocampo bought her antibiotics. Ocampo's baby could easily have been susceptible to side-effects of the drug she requested — common adverse reactions to antibiotics range from skin rashes to death. But prescription laws are rarely enforced in most developing countries, where even the most specialized drugs are available over-the-counter, on simple request.

The third problem concerns dosage. Cost-conscious patients like Ocampo routinely stop using antibiotics once the symptoms disappear, but before the bacteria are actually wiped out. "Not completing the course is just tickling the bug," Saniel says. If the disease is actually bacterial, and if enough bacteria survive, a relapse is likely. Since the body is already weakened, the relapse can be worse than the original illness.

But the fourth problem is perhaps the most serious. Even if Ocampo had visited the doctor, had been given a prescription, bought the right amount of antibiotic and followed the course to the end,

the chances are her time and money would still have been wasted. Most likely, both of Ocampo's children would have recovered — in the same amount of time — without antibiotics. Yet for cough patients in poor countries like the Philippines, antibiotics are often dispensed as if they were throat lozenges.

"Doctors like to use antibiotics like a shotgun," says Dr. Akira Shimouchi, head of the Acute Respiratory Infections Programme at the World Health Organisation's Western Office. "But medically there is no justification for it. You can't use antibiotics to prevent pneumonia. We have reports from all over the world — for those coughs that were not pneumonia, some patients were given antibiotics and some were given placebos. The results were the same: 98 per cent recovered."

Antibiotics are crucial tools of modern medicine, and an essential part of the treatment for major killer diseases such as cholera, syphilis, dysentery, typhoid fever and most forms of pneumonia. Pneumonia and diarrhea each kill about five million children per year worldwide.

Many different types of antibiotics have been developed since the discovery of penicillin in 1939. Broad-spectrum antibiotics attack many kinds of bacteria, while narrow-spectrum antibiotics target specific types. Ideally, doctors should know what sort of bacteria they are trying to kill before they prescribe a drug. But precise diagnosis can be tricky and

expensive, and many doctors work primarily by trial and error.

But only too often, trial and error means prescribing antibiotics "just to be safe." In some countries, antibiotics are given to over 80 per cent of children coming to health clinics with coughs. Shimouchi says less than 15 per cent of childhood coughs actually require antibiotics. In countries that provide antibiotics free to poor patients, clinics typically run out quickly. As a result, those who actually need the expensive drugs are often forced to buy them in drugstores.

A recent study at an emergency room in a private Manila hospital showed that over 90 per cent of patients who received antibiotics did not actually need them. Another study of drugstores in Manila, published in the *Journal of Clinical Epidemiology*, showed that one-fifth of all drugs purchased were antimicrobials, and that two-thirds were bought without prescriptions. Almost 90 per cent of the purchases were for 10 tablets or less, and the average number of tablets was three — not nearly enough to complete a full course.

The World Health Organisation has developed simple ways to determine whether a child's cough is actually pneumonia, or whether a bout of diarrhea is actually cholera or typhoid. For pneumonia, doctors can look for increased breathing speed or contraction of the chest. In cases of diarrhea, the main danger sign of



Antibiotics are often used unnecessarily in developing countries.

something more serious is blood in the stools.

Saniel says doctors are taught about antibiotics in medical school, and should know when it is appropriate to use them.

Of all the effects of the overuse of antibiotics, Saniel is most concerned about resistance — the ability of a disease-causing strain of bacteria to disarm, or defend against, antibiotics. Resistance is especially common in hospitals and densely-populated urban centres, even in rich countries. There have been outbreaks of antibiotic-resistant typhoid fever and dysentery in Latin America, pneumonia in Africa and Europe, and gonorrhea, influenza and meningitis throughout the world.

"Bugs are very smart," says Saniel. "For every new drug, they will find a way of getting around it. That has really been the history of the development of antibiotics."

One of the factors contributing to the overprescription of antibiotics is as old as the medical profession itself. Doctors are under pressure to give patients something tangible at the end of a visit, rather than send them away with assurances that they will get better with time and rest. Mothers, too, feel they are not taking adequate care of their children if they don't provide medicine for every sickness. "Mothers' expectations reflect doctors' attitudes, and vice versa," says Shimouchi with a sigh. "It's a vicious circle." — World News Link.

Low-cholesterol cheese promises healthier indulgence

By Wilson Da Silva
Reuter

SYDNEY — An Australian company claimed a world first with the release of low cholesterol cheeses it says look and taste like the real thing but have 90 per cent less saturated fat.

Scientists at the Melbourne food manufacturer Poseidon Terama Pty Ltd say they have developed a way of taking out of cheese most of the saturated fats that are a major contributor to heart disease.

"The taste, texture and feel of the cheese is maintained along with its nutri-

tional benefits," the company's food technologist, Tim Horwood, said by telephone from Melbourne. "Only the saturated fat content is reduced."

The new process has so far been applied to Feta and Havarti cheeses. Soon, other low saturated fat types will be released.

The company's version of Feta has 17 milligrams of saturated fat per 100 grams compared with 75 milligrams for standard Australian Feta. Havarti has 17 milligrams per 100 grams compared with 120 milligrams for the normal type.

Australian food regulations do not allow the company to label the products "cheese" since they do not contain butter fat, a major saturated fat. The labels call them "Feta style cheese dairy product," with Feta misspelled, and "Havarti style."

Professor Mark Wahlqvist of Monash University's Department of Medicine said the company's major advance was making cheeses commonly recognisable to consumers but with properties that will help reduce the clogging of the arteries.

"It will reduce blood cholesterol levels but not

necessarily be helpful to weight control," he said by telephone. "The fat content is the same, it's just a different type of fat ... with a beneficial impact on the arteries."

Poseidon Terama Managing Director Chris Saris said the company is working to reduce the total fat content of cheeses, but will meanwhile release other low-cholesterol cheeses until it perfects large-scale fat elimination.

"You can't make cheese without some fat, but you can make it a healthier type and try to reduce all of the fat," he said.

AIDS is a blessing, says keeper of chained addicts

By Arup Chanda
Reuter

CHURACHANDPUR, India — "AIDS is not a curse but a blessing, because it turns people to God," said Paukholien, custodian of 65 fettered and handcuffed heroin addicts.

Paukholien's Gamnuam Christian Home, where captivity, manual work and Bible-reading are the only medicines available, is the best answer Churachandpur can find to an imminent epidemic of AIDS (acquired immune deficiency syndrome).

Heroin flows into the town through jungle routes from the Burmese border some 70 kilometres away. Syringes are in short supply. So the addicts share needles — and the human immunodeficiency virus (HIV) that signals AIDS.

The addicts in Paukholien's home have been in chains for about six months at the request of their families after news spread there was

AIDS among them. "One has to understand the tribal psyche here," said V.K. Jena, deputy administrator for the district, which lies in India's northeastern Manipur state.

"The guardians want their wards to be kept like that, since the majority of them have tested HIV positive and if they run away there is the risk of the disease spreading."

The disease is spreading anyway.

The town's police chief, Sahid Ahmad, estimates that more than 1,000 of Churachandpur's 20,000 people are heroin addicts.

The ratio is slightly higher than the average for Manipur. Doctors estimate that one person in 30 in the underdeveloped state is addicted to heroin and that two addicts in five have already picked up HIV.

That means Manipur state has 20,000 AIDS carriers. So far 178 men and 13 women in Churachandpur have tested HIV positive.

Two of the women were infected through sex. All the others contracted the virus through infected syringes.

The home was established to help the destitute in general but in practice became a dumping ground for addicts in the remote town that has no facilities to treat them.

Paukholien's wife was the inspiration. "Ten years ago Lord Jesus spoke to her and told her to start work among the victims of society," he said with emotion.

"We are running this home since 1987. We admit patients free of cost and depend on God for our needs."

Donations pay the home's costs, about \$80 a day. "If there is no food we pray together and God sends us food."

Tian Lian Lal, a boy of 12, is kept chained all the time because he is "possessed by evil spirits," Paukholien said.

The other men and youths have their handcuffs, but not their ankle fetters, removed when they do any work, mainly to build more metal-

roofed bamboo huts to sleep in.

At present there is no room to move between their beds, each of which has a metal ring attached so that the patients can be chained while they sleep.

The 10 women are unchained to cook and sweep while Paukholien and his wife keep watch on them.

All inmates stay fettered to read the Bible and struggle to keep the links out of the way when they eat.

Heroin withdrawal symptoms are treated with prayer.

"We pray together seven times a day," Paukholien said.

Two patients committed suicide at the home in December by jumping into the well, police said.

Jena would have liked to find an alternative to the shackles. "We had planned to construct a high wall around the compound, but the home is not even a registered society and as such we cannot invest government funds," she said.

Weekend Crossword

MEASURING UP

By Don Johnson

ACROSS
1. All right
2. What — God wrought?
3. War memorial
13 Kind of bean
14 Kind of acid
20 World section
21 A Turner
22 "Kick Out Of You"
23 Old sci-fi TV show
24 Common molding
27 Held fast to one's heart
28 Hilly
29 Calling
30 Wrath
31 Nostril
32 Brains

DOWN
1. Desert one's party
2. Winkles
3. Part of a b.
4. Beloved of Radames
5. Anticlimax
6. Tennis great
7. Bound
8. Crane
9. Rascal
10. Chair makers
11. Poker stake
12. Flad
13. Gun. Custer was here
14. Gr. marketplace
15. Large fragment of a glacier
16. Piece of music
17. Scurries out
19. Trigonometric function

Diagramless

10 X 19, By Harold B. Cousins

ACROSS
1. Long, vita brews
2. Fill up
3. Formal party
12 Fibbed
14 Short jacket
15 Ms Adams
16 Part of Irene
18 Keep waiting
20 Gift for the teacher
21 Wipe out
22 Sad song

DOWN
1. Noted racehorse
2. Jack the —
3. Archival
4. Bomb fragments
5. Meet me day
6. Melody
7. Omet item
8. Contradict
9. Embellish
10. Speech
11. Fr. painter
12. Fanned

34 Swimmers in the altogether
40 Sandra or Ruby
41 Wild water buffalo
42 Purchase
43 Takes down
44 Food fish
45 Physiologist
46 Jaccus
51 All the players
52 AL member
53 Deaf's land
54 Author Bret
55 Super
56 Performed in a way
57 Summer wear
58 Ditch — (transit desert)

24 Stage
25 It's dear to me
26 Secret agent
33 Tidy
34 Fies
35 Nor. money
36 Dekara's land
37 Cory homes
38 "your pardon"
39 Tavern
40 Soc. prel
41 Viceroy
42 OED word
43 Fast planes
49 Illuminated
50 Only — a customer
51 Boves
52 Fighting force
53 Ascends
54 Newsmen Koppel
57 FL trees

23 Items in companies
24 Bull
25 Sp. miss
26 Track
27 Slopper
28 Sore
29 Ser
30 Dinner courses
40 Traditional knowledge
41 Shows happiness

13 Handbags
14 Harry
17 Fr. town
18 Wheeler
19 Commercial
20 Diamonds
21 Chn. society
22 In the saddle
23 Threhold
24 Freely pear
25 Tremulous sounds

65 School subject
66 USA ment. abbr.
67 Nobodies
68 Rabbit trimming
69 hats
70 No-ro
71 Augustus
72 Stimulated
73 Aids
74 Allen and
75 Lasso
76 Alas
77 Russia
78 Locust
79 Daven
80 Money in
81 Doves out
82 Sp. queen
83 Food shark
84 Ditch — (transit desert)
85 Practiced for a bout

58 Warned up
59 Accuse
60 Madhouse
61 Fern leathers
62 Kind of party
63 Sem. — Fr.
64 Problem
65 Winter Anta
66 Hat
67 Fine line of a letter
68 Turk. city
69 Victorian actor
70 Locomotive man. abbr.
71 Hurt
72 Aid sing
73 Caver base
74 Hnd. letter
75 Suggestive of an Eden dweller

42 Ms Zadora
43 Once — blue moon
44 Composer
45 Social event
46 Rudder levers
47 Patriotic go.
48 Sp. ladies' abbr.
49 Palmist
50 Western hats

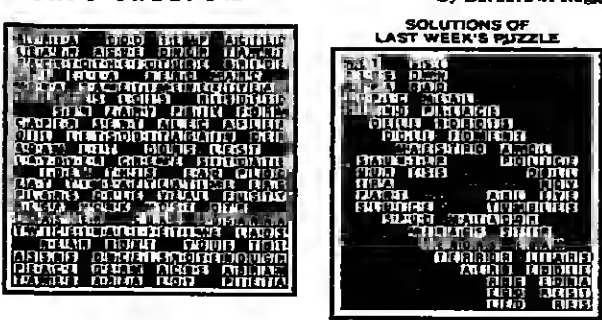
37 Undercoats of paint
38 Related maternally
44 Heath
45 "smell"
46 Overheaded
48 Carnation machine
49 Cavers
50 Camp. pt.
51 Indian abodes
52 Smeared

99 Biblical prophet
100 Nothing
101 Tough question
102 Also known as
104 Feared
110 Musical direction
111 Combustion of a kind
112 Allen and
113 Glenberg
114 — for
115 Bridge seat
116 Telephone
117 Doves out
118 Swindles
119 Ottoman Empire
120 Bulging cheeks

90 Wireless
91 Accuse
92 Reflections
93 Prologues
94 Begunings
95 Postscript
96 Sudden burst of energy
97 Heat Fr.
98 Valuable quality
99 Carry off forcibly, old style
102 L. resort
104 Lool
105 Before Major or Minor
106 Egypt. queen for short
107 Heale
108 — Stanley Gardner
109 Mill. awards
112 Oolong

CRUPTOGRAMS
1. XRSILVXSR SCZAVXSK BOZSBZ OSI OSQ
2. YBI IOSAZ WG YKSCWYI ICVRVXH
PYRVSXKI SK PSAYWYI RSYHOVXH
OZAWZL
3. EID QD PAIR QD HAIR CKNQDF PNACD
BOSS-SKDFRE YEKGYZQU LAIR GQLZY
OG SAIM AB AIRY RA DRKM EQY FAIRY
IDN YEARY.
4. XMET HLL HMAALE HT CSQJ JLV
RSJYSCXDYE XY ADOQORXSKS RSJWLY.
5. L SUGY ALGLY ANHTRY ITUP CKEKING
GKPC GREENSR.

SOLUTIONS OF LAST WEEK'S PUZZLE



Tribalism in Iraq is not dead and buried; solution lies in democracy, power sharing

By Mariam Shabin

BAGHDAD — One of the aims of the Socialist Baath Party in Iraq has been the eradication of tribalism and regionalism in favour of a national Iraqi Arab identity. But even after 23 continuous years in power, the Baathists do not seem to have been able to totally sway tribal and regional loyalties towards the state. Regionalism suddenly became evident as a result of recent internal unrest. It was kept alive apparently by economic and social frustrations of recent wars as well as by the absence of democratic reforms.

Zuhair Atie, an artist and dealer in his mid fifties, and his wife, Hala, are an example of an integrated Iraqi family, at least on the surface. His family originates from Diwaniya, in southern Iraq; they are Shi'ites. His wife comes from the north and is a Kurd. Life in Baghdad has been good to them and having been educated both at home and abroad in Europe, both are well read and have made a comfortable living. They are an upper middle class Iraqi family.

But Mrs. Atie cannot stop talking about her family in the north to any visitor who will listen. She has had no word from them since the "troubles" started and is worried about the well being.

Mrs. Atie is disturbed by what she sees as an official account-taking of ethnic groups since the Kurds rebelled in early March. "I cannot remember a time in Iraq when one was asked by officials if one was a Kurd, an Arab or a Turkman. Now you can't come down to Baghdad from the north without being asked such questions; it's frightening," Mrs. Atie says.

Mr. Atie jokes, mockingly, "I come from a southern tribe, and my wife comes from a northern tribe."

While Mr. Atie jokes, it is evident that for this family, as for many in Iraq, tribalism is, at least on an emotional level, taken very seriously.

A large art work stands in the upstairs corner of the Atie's home-museum and, as he explains, the scene in the painting depicts the battle of Karbala in 680 A.D. A blood stained head flying in the air depicts the head of the Imam Hussein, grandson of the Prophet Mohammad. Pointing to the head of Hussein, Atie bursts into tears.

Mr. Atie is a Shi'ite, not an orthodox, but by birth and belonging. He is a member of

the country's largest religious group. The holiest sites of Shi'ite Muslims have been damaged by the internal fighting during the last two months in Najaf and Karbala. The feelings of all Muslims, Shi'ites in particular, have been hurt by the sight of bullet holes, blood stained and bombed out walls at holy shrines all over southern Iraq.

Mr. Atie feels his tribe has been attacked at its core. No matter how hard he tries the hurt will go away.

Iraqis from the south feel particularly hurt at what they see as a violation of their holy shrines by man with arms.

The highest Shi'ite cleric in the world, the Ayatollah Koui, a native of Najaf, was recently on Iraqi television with President Saddam Hussein. The ayatollah is known to have asked for clemency for participants in the southern rebellion.

The government granted amnesty to those who had taken part in it under the condition that they had not killed, raped or looted. The amnesty came almost two weeks after the Kurds were given the same chance.

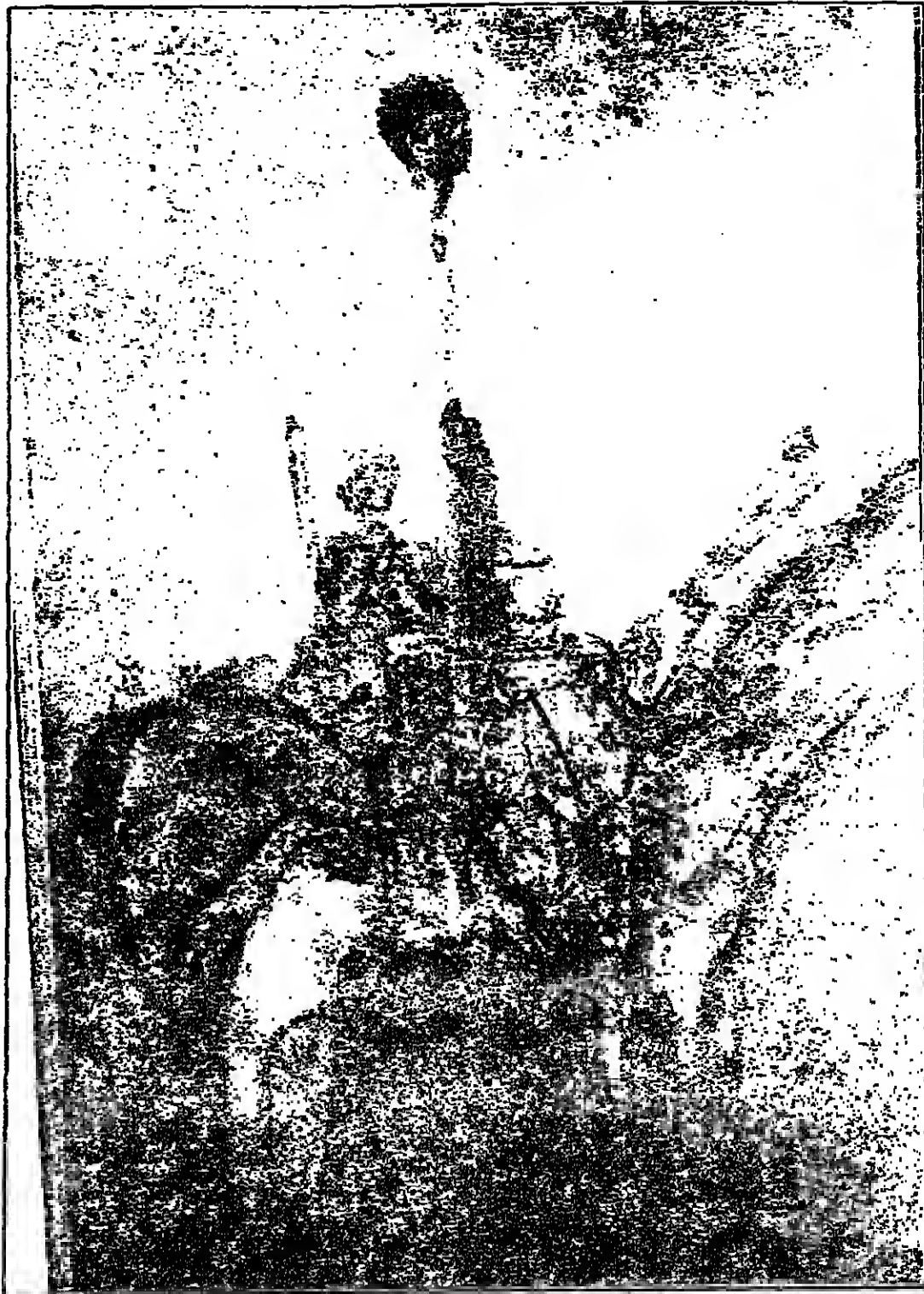
During a visit to Najaf by members of the international press, Imam Koui said he had hoped for an end to the bloodshed and condemned all those who had caused it. With many members of his immediate family dead and many others under arrest as a result of the internal unrest, he answered no questions on whether a clemency for members of his family was granted. He has stayed at his home in Najaf since the "troubles" began in March with the exception of his visit to the capital to meet with President Saddam.

His consistent calls for peace and tranquility had come too late for many southern Iraqi Shi'ites who died fighting for the establishment of an Islamic republic and the end of the rule of the Baath government in Baghdad.

While southern Iraqis are mostly Arab Shi'ites, many northern Iraqis are Sunni Muslims but non-Arabs.

Unlike the southern Shi'ites, some Kurds do not see themselves as a part of the whole of Iraq. Their anger is often not directed at the U.S.-led forces which bombed Iraq, at Iran or Turkey which have outrageous human rights records vis-a-vis their Kurdish populations, but at the Iraqi government which they feel has suppressed their efforts to "liberate" themselves.

Most Kurds who serve in the government argue that the re-



Painting symbolising the head of Imam Hussein, grandson of the Prophet Mohammad, which brought Zuhair Atie to tears when remembering the damage that was done to the Shiite holy places during the March rebellion (Photo by Mariam Shabin)

level already exists for Iraq's 3-4 million Kurds and political autonomy is not something to be desired, say many Kurds who serve in top government posts in Baghdad.

Among the people who subscribe to this school of thought is Bahadin Ahmad, who denounced separatist Kurdish groups including those led by Jalal Talabani, who heads the Patriotic Union of Kurdistan. In the Baghdad-based official Kurdish daily, (part of which is written in Arabic and part in Kurdish) Mr. Ahmad frequently calls for an abandonment of separatist ideas in favour of a complete national union with the existing Iraqi state.

Other than Shi'ites and Kurds there are at least 60 other regional, ethnic or religious groups in Iraq which do not fall into the category of the

five million Iraqi Sunni Muslims or the one million Christians.

As a group, the Christian community, which is divided into at least 20 different denominations but is dominated by the members of the Chaldean community of 750,000, is the fourth largest group in Iraq.

The right to religious practice and affiliation has always been allowed by the Baath government.

The city with the largest Christian population in Iraq, Mosul, was heavily bombed during the Gulf war but resentment against the West appears to be subdued among the Christian population.

As a community, the Christians have been free to practice their religion and have historically held posts of influence, especially in the financial and cultural spheres in Iraq. Members of the community now claim that to interfere in politics as a minority would not work in their favour since many of their existing privileges would be denied them were they to take a position which would not be close to the government line.

"As a community it would not be beneficial for us to rock the boat right now, because as a group we have not been discriminated against," admitted one Chaldean member of the government.

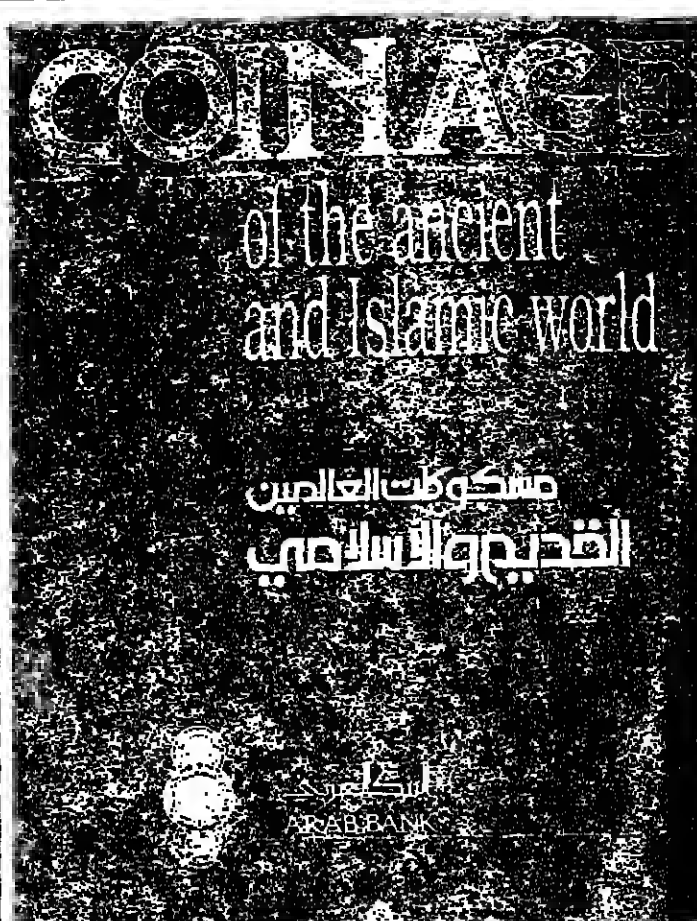
Deputy Prime Minister and former Foreign Minister Tariq Aziz is a Christian, but in the words of one family friend, "he is an Iraqi first."

While it is difficult to find an Iraqi in Baghdad who would identify him or herself by their religious or ethnic affiliation, those affiliations do exist, and the central government cannot afford to ignore them.

But to keep ethnic and religious groups together, democratic reforms and proportional representation as well as power sharing by both the executive and legislative branches of government can do the job for the Iraqis, according to observers and ordinary Iraqis.

In order for that to occur, outside interference in favour of one group or another must end, the observers say, and the Iraqi people must be given a chance to work things out on their own for the sake of their common survival and coexistence.

The writer, a Jordan Times staff reporter, has recently returned from a second visit to Iraq after the war.



Coins: From gold to alloys

By Saad G. Hattar
Special to the Jordan Times

AMMAN — Travellers these days carry dinars, dollars or pounds to pay for their travel and shopping expenses. Many already use "plastic cards. This is a far cry from the days when our grandfathers used to carry loads of gold and silver coins on belts tightly secured to their waists.

But how did currencies develop to take this shape and form? When, how and why did ancient civilisations introduce coins and in what shape and form?

Answers to these queries would be found in "Coinage of The Ancient and Islamic World," an illustrated book that recently hit the bookshelves in Jordan.

BOOK REVIEW

Produced by the Amman-based Arab Bank, the 95-page book sheds some light on the development, introduction and spread of coins from prehistoric ages to the Islamic civilisation and beyond.

The book, jointly prepared in English and Arabic by Dr. Nayef Goussous and Dr. Khalaf Taravneh, illustrates the coinage spread in ancient civilisations from the Phoenician era to Byzantine times up to the Arab Revolt in modern history.

According to the authors, the coinage of the ancient western world originated in the Seventh Century B.C. on the coast of Asia Minor, in the regions known as Lydia and Ionia — both in the vicinity of Izmir and Turkey.

As direct barter proved often inconclusive, the need arose for a medium of exchange that was accepted by all traders, durable and of intrinsic value.

The first coins, the book

says, were struck on bean-shaped lumps of electrum — a naturally occurring alloy of gold and silver. — Those primitive coins were stamped on one side and had various weights and sizes.

They remained the same until the Lydians came. They introduced authentic one-size, gold-guaranteed coins.

According to Greek historian Herodotus, King Croesus of Lydia (560-456 B.C.) abandoned electrum in favour of a currency made of pure silver and gold. This was the world's first bimetallic currency, which involved the principle of having a fixed relationship between the values of two metals used for currency.

A short time later, the practice of minting coins spread to Europe. The Greek island of Aegina was the first to adopt this practice and issue coins with a smooth-shelled sea turtle.

Cities of mainland ancient Greece, such as Athens and Corinth, also began to issue coins, and each city developed its own symbols or mint marks.

After almost half a century of minting silver coins, Athens introduced the largest silver coin, a four-drachma piece which was the size of earlier coins.

This new Athenian coinage became the most famous and was widely used up to the time of Alexander the Great. It was the first to bear the design on both sides of the coin.

The book then travels to other civilisations through the history of mankind. It talks about the Jewish coinage, the Arabia Felix, the Parthian, the Philistino-Arabian, the Roman provincial, the Sassanian and the Islamic coinage.

Of recent history, the illustrations shed light on the Ottoman currencies and the coins used during the Great Arab Revolt at the turn of the century.

Bethlehem

(Continued from page 1)

group of Palestinian activists known as the Black Panthers to kill a Jew.

In the Gaza Strip town of Rafah, Palestinians shot to death a fellow Arab suspected of collaborating with Israel. Palestinians identified the man as Memdouh Abu Dhaier, 28, a relative of the Rafah mayor.

Falasha influx expected

Meanwhile, Israel has set up a task force to cope with an expected wave of Jews fleeing the rebel advance on the Ethiopian capital of Addis Ababa, an immigration official said Tuesday.

Israel's Ethiopian community expressed fears for the 18,000 Jews still in Addis Ababa, and officials urged a deal be worked out for airlifting them to Israel before the city falls to chaos.

Michael Kleiner, chairman of the parliament's immigration committee, said Israel should offer Ethiopian President Mengistu Haile Mariam political asylum in exchange for allowing the remaining Jews to leave.

"Israel has to stop relying on others and turn directly to Mengistu and offer political asylum to him, his family and his close associates," Kleiner told the Hadashot newspaper.

Lebanon

(Continued from page 1)

Christian cabinet. An unidentified leader of Hizbollah, or party of God, told the daily newspaper An Nahar that the plan to disarm the militias "does not concern us."

"We don't have heavy weapons to lay down," he said in an interview. "Our weapons are not for internal battles. We don't want to take part in an internal battle. Our weapons are to be

used in fighting the (Israeli) enemy."

Hizbollah comprises about 3,000 militants and is believed linked to factions holding most of the 13 Westerners missing in Lebanon. The captives are six Americans, four Britons, two Germans and an Italian.

A government source told Reuters the LF decided to give up its arms after receiving guarantees over the weekend from the government as well as from Syria and the United States — two

main foreign power brokers in Lebanon.

The LF had said the surrender of weapons depended on the recruitment of militiamen into the army and other jobs. It means the impoverished government will have to find jobs for some 20,000 men.

The LF proposal had been rejected by some deputies and government ministers but the sources said the LF was told the gunmen would be hired under a government decree to be ratified by parliament.

Baker

(Continued from page 1)

might happen if that doesn't happen," Fitzwater said when asked if the administration shared the views of Republican Senate leader Robert Dole.

Dole said on Sunday that the United States might have to review its aid to the Middle East if nations there did not agree to Arab-Israeli peace talks. Commenting on weekend news

reports asserting that Baker's Mideast missions have been based on the fallacy that both Israel and her Arab neighbours want peace, Fitzwater said he could never "agree that a people or a government don't want peace."

The United States, he said, "continues to hope that both sides want peace. We have found that that has been a central yearning of mankind throughout history, and we assume that to be the case today." The leaders of

the nations involved have each "proclaimed that they want peace," he said.

Fitzwater said it isn't "fair to say that the leaders of these countries and the citizens that live there don't want peace. I believe they do. They just have very strong feelings about how it should be achieved and what their rights are and what their responsibilities are. I don't think I could ever agree that a people or a government don't want peaceful conditions to live under."

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Economy

Japan wants IMF to create money to avert international credit crunch

WASHINGTON (R) — Japan Monday called on the International Monetary Fund (IMF) to create money to help head off a global credit crunch, but the proposal immediately ran into opposition from the United States and Germany.

Under the Japanese plan, the IMF would hand out "Special Drawing Rights (SDRs)," the fund's own currency, to its 155 members, thus boosting their financial reserves and giving them added borrowing and spending power.

"To address the problem of global resource shortage...the possibility of an allocation of SDRs might be studied and pursued," Japanese Finance Minister Ryszard Hashimoto told the IMF's policymaking interim committee.

He proposed that the IMF staff study the Japanese plan and report back to member governments a year from now.

Bundesbank President Karl

Otto Poehl said Germany is opposed to an increase in the number of SDRs to alleviate liquidity shortages in certain countries.

"We are strictly against it," he said after a meeting of the Group of Seven nations, arguing that it would misuse the special currency. Such a creation of money should be based on global need and not on liquidity shortages of certain nations, he said.

SDRs were created out of a basket of five leading currencies in 1970 to provide reserves for countries in response to the spiralling global economic growth of the 1960s. The last allocation of SDRs was in 1981.

Japan has proposed that industrial nations — which would take up nearly half of any SDR allocation by the IMF — lend the money back to the fund. It could then use the cash to help developing nations following tough economic reforms.

Part of the money could be

used as bridging loans, to help developing countries cope with economic emergencies until other funds become available.

Tokyo says the plan would help meet burgeoning capital needs; from economic reform in eastern Europe to reconstruction of the Middle East.

The United States joined Germany in its opposition of the proposal, arguing that for the IMF to create money out of thin air through an SDR allocation now would be inflationary.

The SDR is made up of the U.S. dollar, the Japanese yen, the German mark, the British pound and the French franc.

While it is not used in commercial transactions, it plays an important role for the IMF and its member countries, allowing governments to use the currency in transactions and operations among themselves, the IMF and certain other institutions.

The Japanese proposal has won some support — from France,

Belgium and the IMF itself.

Although Japan has not said now how many SDRs could be issued, French Finance Minister Pierre Boregoy mentioned a figure of \$30 billion or \$40 billion worth of SDRs. One SDR is valued at \$1.33.

IMF Managing Director Michel Camdessus has backed the Japanese plan and expressed hopes it would lead to a bigger role for the SDR in the international monetary system.

Proponents of the SDR have long hoped it would replace the U.S. dollar as the anchor of the world monetary system, but opposition from the United States and other major nations has prevented that.

Japan in the past has opposed an SDR allocation.

But Hashimoto said that the Japanese idea of setting up a special pool of funds that can be targeted on developing nations pursuing economic reforms is attractive.

Bank deposit insurance institution in Jordan undergoes 'labour pains'

By Samir Sbaftq
Special to the Jordan Times

AMMAN — The highly controversial theme of insuring bank deposits became more contentious Monday evening when bankers and economists hotly debated the steps being taken for setting up an institution for that purpose in Jordan.

Opening the economic meeting, which was the second among the many planned by the Association of Banks in Jordan (ABJ) for this year, Dr. Abdallah Al Malki, the ABJ head, mentioned that the proposed entity was under an advanced stage of consideration having received a draft copy of regulations in that regard from the Central Bank of Jordan (CBJ).

He even expected the CBJ to launch the institution later this year.

"Insuring bank deposits draws many who support the idea and as many from the opposite camp who defend every rule of free market," the lecturer, Mr. Ahmad Nammari, told the audience.

Mr. Nammari, an economic writer and a senior staff member at the Arab Banks Union, detailed the parties in favour of such an entity as being the central banks and the small banks of unsophisticated management that encounter difficulties in attracting deposits and cannot compete well with larger or foreign financial institutions.

Another sector, Mr. Nammari added, is the group of people who argue that the economic sophistication of modern life has given the financial institutions an exceptionally important role where by any instability at any of them would undermine the national economy, hitting small and large companies in the private and public sectors alike.

Citing the example of the United States in the 1930s, when thousands of banks went bankrupt, trailing thousands of various other companies and economic activities into the Great Depression, the lecturer pointed to the security and stability that the U.S. reintroduced after adopting

the world's first ever insurance scheme on bank deposits.

He also pointed to Lebanon, where the intra-bank insolvency in 1966 wiped out the savings of nearly 40,000 depositors and greatly shook other banks and companies prompting the government to establish a fund to ensure deposits in 1967.

Controversy appeared when Mr. Nammari mentioned that the U.S. insurance entity was now days in a bad financial shape and even struggling for survival and that Edmond Naim, the governor of the Lebanese Central Bank, has recently recommended the scrapping of the similar body in Lebanon while suggesting alternative security for bank depositors.

Mr. Nammari said that the subject of an insurance fund for bank deposits was also a contentious issue in Egypt, although some forms of such a fund were operating normally in India, Canada and Britain.

Turning to Jordan, the lecturer said that citizens mistakenly think that the CBJ guarantees bank deposits. He attributed the public view to historical events when the CBJ intervened to stabilise the financial situation in two local banks which encountered difficulties in the past.

Mr. Nammari also dismissed any linkage between the case of Petra Bank and the current moves to set up the deposit insurance institution saying that, as it is usually the case, people tend to tie a rescue plan to a recent crisis.

Stressing that there was no linkage, he noted that the 1971 CBJ law included a clause to set up, if need be, a deposit insurance institution, but said that this remained unimplemented until 1983 when the CBJ and the ABJ revived the idea through a questionnaire on whether such an institution was really necessary.

In 1990, Mr. Nammari added, the subject was being formulated into a draft statute for further discussions.

Outlining the main points of the draft statute for the proposed entity, Mr. Nammari said it was envisaged at a JD 2 million capital, 50 per cent of which would be

a CBJ equity with the other 50 per cent shared by commercial and specialised banks and financial companies, each according to a percentage of its capital to overall capital.

It was also suggested that each bank pay a two per thousand dinars of its total deposits in Jordanian dinars as an annual contribution to the fund to cover a maximum of JD 20,000 of a deposit a bank holds for each client.

The draft statute recommended investing the money of the proposed entity in government or government-guaranteed bonds and said that it be governed by a board of directors made up of seven members, four of whom from the government and three from the private sector, to be chosen by the ABJ.

Avoiding any reference to guarantees on loans or any other form of bank credit, the draft statute also provided tax exemption on the amounts paid in the fund.

Mr. Nammari stated his opposition to the scheme defending his position by saying that total bank deposits in Jordan averaged JD 2 billion, of which JD 1.2 billion were held by only two major banks.

He calculated that these two big banks would be the most burdened under the insurance scheme in terms of profitability.

Other attendants voiced their fears that the proposed insurance institution would raise the cost of funds for banks and may result in higher interest rates while a few saw the scheme as detrimental to encouraging banks to modernise and develop by preparing specialised and honest cadres.

The majority, however, stood against the idea in principle, arguing that honesty and internal and external audit by a bank, an auditor and the CBJ, were key issues to centre efforts around rather than setting up a new institution which may in the future further weaken banking standards, management and vigor.

"Why create the scheme when the rescue operation would come after the disaster or (the ruining



Ahmad Al Nammari (of Basra), one commented. Mr. Ahmad Abdul Fatah, a CBJ senior employee who attended the meeting, fiercely defended establishing the insurance body saying that the central bank oversees the general policies of banks and should not be expected to monitor every account in a bank.

Therefore, he said, such an entity would see to it that things are more in line and in order at a bank because it would also weigh the risks of that bank when granting credit.

Discussions broadened at this stage questioning the amount of insurance coverage, the type and tenor of deposits and the restriction on the investments of the proposed body.

The government management of the insurance fund was also questioned as well as the percentage that banks should pay of their deposits to the fund.

Mr. Nammari raised an important question when he asked how such an insurance entity for deposits could function effectively and logically when the CBJ allows a bank to lend about 25 per cent of its capital to a single client.

He said other banking regulations should be amended to give the proposed institution a chance to succeed.

Mr. Mousa Shehadeh, the Islamic Bank head, criticised the scheme as un-Islamic and, he said, as far as his bank was concerned, the matter was closed for discussion.

E. Europe warned not to rely on long-term Western help

WASHINGTON (R) — The world's richest industrial nations Monday warned the countries of eastern Europe not to expect an unlimited flow of Western help to whip their economies into shape.

Meeting in Washington, finance ministers and central bankers from the Group of Ten (G-10) leading industrial states said financing to help the East increase vital imports like machine tools could only be temporary — and limited.

The G-10, which actually comprises 11 countries, groups the United States, Canada, Japan, Britain, Italy, France, Germany, Belgium, the Netherlands, Sweden and Switzerland.

Belgian Finance Minister Philippe Maystadt, the G-10 chairman, said eastern European countries had to realise Western

government assistance could not pay for ambitious reform programmes.

"Some countries will need more resources than the official sector could provide," he told a news conference.

The only way forward was for countries to stand on their own by enacting painful market reforms to encourage domestic savings and attract foreign investors.

"A successful transition would stimulate domestic savings and attract, over time, autonomous private capital inflows," said a statement issued by the G-10 after its meeting.

On the surface the G-10 appeared united, but some tensions did surface, dividing the United States and west European nations on how to share the burden of financing eastern Europe's

economic recovery.

Both France and Britain said the cost of bailing out the East be shared equally among all rich countries — stopping short of criticising any one country. But Germany accused the United States of failing to pull its weight.

Horst, Koehler, state secretary in the German finance ministry, described a U.S. contribution of \$15 million to a \$1 billion official credit to Czechoslovakia as "a joke".

U.S. Treasury Secretary Nicholas Brady bit back, saying exports from eastern European countries to the Soviet Union were being displaced by export credit schemes — the way one country promises cheap finance to a country when it agrees to import its products. Brady's remark was an apparent reference

to Germany, officials at the meeting said.

Differences also surfaced over how far the West should go in writing off eastern Europe's debts.

Maystadt said last month's 50 per cent writedown of Poland's official debt to Western creditor nations would not set a precedent for other debtors.

French Finance Minister Pierre Boregoy disagreed, suggesting that other G-10 members should consider granting countries in exceptional difficulties the same terms offered to Poland.

The G-10 said eastern European countries would not find a painless way to successfully transition from a state-dominated economy to one based on free markets.

AMMAN EXCHANGE RATES					
Tuesday, April 30, 1991					
Central Bank official rates					
	Buy	Sell			
U.S. dollar	681.0	685.0	Japanese yen (for 100)	496.6	499.6
Pound Sterling	1155.6	1162.5	Dutch guilder	345.6	347.4
Deutschemark	389.4	391.7	Swedish crown	109.3	110.0
Swiss franc	462.6	465.4	Italian lira (for 100)	52.7	53.0
French franc	115.4	116.1	Belgian franc (for 10)	189.1	190.2

LONDON EXCHANGE RATES			
LONDON (R) — Following are the buying and selling rates for leading world currencies and gold against the dollar at midsession on the London foreign exchange and bullion markets Tuesday.			
One Sterling	1.7080/90	U.S. dollar	
One U.S. dollar	1.1510/15	Canadian dollar	
	1.7360/70	Deutschemark	
	1.9495/9505	Dutch guilders	
	1.4655/65	Swiss francs	
	35.63/67	Belgian francs	
	5.8575/8925	French francs	
	1282/1288	Italian lire	
	137.30/40	Japanese yen	
	6.1950/2000	Swedish crowns	
	6.7550/7600	Norwegian crowns	
	6.6350/6400	Danish crowns	
One ounce of gold	353.15/65	U.S. dollars	

WORLD STOCK MARKETS	
By Reuters	
TOKYO — Wall Street's overnight fall was countered by a firm yen and programme buying. The Nikkei average lost 12.43 points to 26,111.25.	
SYDNEY — Profit-taking followed three days of gains. The All Ordinaries index slumped 24.1 points to end at 1534.2.	
HONG KONG — Stocks fell steadily until lower levels triggered buy orders. The Hang Seng index slid 36.36 to 3,588.36.	
SINGAPORE — Profit-taking pushed down prices. The Straits Times index which hit 1,566.75 at noon, the highest since July, closed 4.7 points down at 1,553.94.	
FRANKFURT — German shares closed an unanimated session easier ahead of the May Day holiday. The DAX index ended down 14.49 points at 1,605.79.	
ZURICH — Shares saw a late rally in response to Wall Street but the SPI index closed at 1,073.7, down 5.1.	
PARIS — The CAC-40 index fell 18.17 points to 1,779.18, struggling off a cut in the U.S. discount rate as the bourse wound down for the May Day holiday.	
LONDON — Shares eased back when Wall Street failed to hold all the gains made on the U.S. discount rate cut. The FTSE index closed at 2,486.3, down 11.9.	
NEW YORK — Shares jumped at the opening bell on a half-point cut in the Federal Reserve's discount rate, then slipped back on doubts that the U.S. economy would revive. At 1522 GMT the Dow Jones industrials were up 20.79 points to 2,897.77.	

U.S. central bank cuts interest rate

WASHINGTON (AP) — The Federal Reserve (Fed), stepping up its fight against the U.S. recession, lowered a key short-term interest rate by one-half point Tuesday, to 5.5 per cent.

The drop was the third in the benchmark discount rate since Dec. 18, reflecting growing concern over the downturn in the American economy.

Such a move usually results in lower interest on other loans, including consumer credit, and thus stimulates spending and economic growth.

The Fed had been under growing pressure from President George Bush's administration in recent weeks to do more to fight the downturn in the U.S. economy with lower interest rates.

Bush urged the Fed to lower the rate last week. Tuesday's action was likely to be followed by reductions in a variety of consumer and business interest rates. Some analysts said they looked for commercial banks to drop their prime lending rate.

The Fed lowered the discount rate from 6.5 per cent to 6.0 per cent on Feb. 1, just six weeks after pushing it down from seven per cent to 6.5 per cent.

The Bush administration and most economists acknowledge the American economy is in a recession and the Fed moves were strong signals that it intended to combat the weakening economy with easier credit.

The Labour Department has reported the nation's unemployment rate jumped to 6.8 per cent in March, its highest rate in more than four years. The rate had risen to 6.5 per cent in February.

The 0.3 per cent increases in both months were the largest since 1986.

Since last summer, more than two million jobs have been lost, most in the construction and manufacturing industries.

And, department statistics show that consumer prices fell 0.1 per cent in March, the first decline in almost five years. The Fed had kept interest rates high in an attempt to curb inflation.

The discount rate represents the interest the Fed charges on loans to banks and other financial institutions. A decrease often results in less expensive costs for other short-term loans such as adjustable-rate mortgages and car loans.

In fact, banks began lowering their prime rate — the rate they charge their best customers — immediately after the Fed acted in February. If fell to nine per cent from the 9.5 per cent level reached shortly after the December discount rate cut.

Until December, the discount rate had remained at seven per cent since Feb. 24, 1989, when the central bank raised it from 6.5 per cent to slow the economy in an attempt to curb inflation. The December reduction was the first since August 1986.

However, the central bank had been slowly easing the federal funds rate that peaked at 9.75 per cent in the spring of 1989 as evidence mounted that the economy was becoming dangerously weak. That rate was lowered from 6.75 per cent to 6.25 per cent on Feb. 1 and to 6.0 per cent on March 8 within hours after the February unemployment report was released.

Brady seeks new body to help M.E.

WASHINGTON (AP) — A new fund for long-term help to countries in the Middle East was proposed Monday by U.S. Treasury Secretary Nicholas Brady.

Theo Waigel, West Germany's minister of finance, said countries there must mainly make their own effort to work together and "overcome the conflicts in their societies." Outside help in a first period would be necessary at the start, he acknowledged.

Both men spoke at a closed door meeting of the interim committee, which steers the policy of 155 governments in the International Monetary Fund (IMF). Versions of their statements were distributed to reporters.

U.S. Secretary of State James Baker earlier this year floated the idea of a new intergovernmental development bank for the Middle East, but won little support. The administration of President George Bush has been interested in making something more lasting out of the Gulf crisis financial coordination group. It collected more than \$16 billion to help the countries hardest hit by the war, especially Jordan, Turkey and Egypt.

"We believe that an effective approach supporting long term development in the Middle East would be one that is closely associated with the World Bank and the IMF," Brady told the meeting.

"This could be through the establishment of a fund, facility or subsidiary within the World Bank, supported or coordinated with the IMF," he said.

The bank, the fund's sister



Nicholas Brady organisation, is the biggest source of aid to the Third World. It has the same 155 member countries as the fund, including Israel, which does not belong to Middle East bodies.

Norman Lamont, Britain's chancellor of the exchequer, said the countries in the region must themselves take the lead. He recommended attention to the ideas of the bank on how they can develop effectively.

At a news conference before the meeting, French Finance Minister Pierre Boregoy suggested that the help should take the form of a coordinating group.

Brady praised the members of the Gulf Cooperation Council, an organisation dealing with a narrower region, for setting up a new development programme there. Syria and Egypt would be the beneficiaries. The U.S. administration would like to see help for Jordan and Turkey too.

"Multilateral cooperation must also be the cornerstone of efforts to promote market-oriented reform and economic development in the Middle East," Brady said.

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S. Africa rushes to meet ANC deadline for prisoner releases

CAPE TOWN (R) — Ten African National Congress (ANC) activists were freed from the notorious Robben Island Jail Tuesday as the government rushed to meet an ANC deadline for the release for political prisoners.

President F.W. de Klerk also announced late Monday that he had extended unconditional immunity from prosecution for anti-apartheid crimes of the ANC's top leaders until June 30.

ANC Deputy President Nelson Mandela said in December he would break off settlement talks with de Klerk if all political prisoners were not released by April 30.

Justice Department officials said a further 16 activists would be released from Robben Island later Tuesday, leaving about 40 men in the high-security facility that Mandela helped to build during his own 27-year imprisonment for fighting apartheid.

The ANC leader set the same deadline for the safe return of political refugees, including some wanted by police for offences committed during the ANC's 30-year armed struggle against white rule.

De Klerk and Mandela agreed

during talks in Pretoria last August that political prisoners should be freed in return for an ANC pledge to suspend its guerrilla war.

The agreement mentioned on April 30 as the date for completing the process, but the two sides differ on whether this was intended as a target date or a deadline. Mandela announced after an ANC conference in December that the movement would treat the date as a deadline.

Government officials said Monday fewer than 200 political prisoners were still in jail at the weekend. The ANC said up to 5,000 people had still to be freed. The men freed from Robben Island, near Cape Town, Tuesday included ANC guerrillas given sentences of 15 years to life for planting bombs that caused slight injuries and extensive damage.

No one has yet been freed from anti-apartheid attacks that resulted in death or serious injuries. The government has not said what will happen to the estimated 4,000 people, mostly black teenagers, jailed for stone-throwing and similar crimes during an uprising against white rule between 1964 and 1990.

De Klerk, speaking after one

of the bloodiest weekends of township violence, has said South Africa could be heading for civil war.

In a speech to parliament Monday he invited Nelson Mandela and Zulu chief Mangosuthu Buthelezi to join him in peace talks and announced moves to sell oil worth up to two billion rand (\$770 million), to be spent creating jobs and stimulating the economy.

"Today there is a psychosis of violence on both sides of the political spectrum... which may land us in civil war," De Klerk said, adding that he had watched television footage of the weekend's events in sadness and horror.

Police said at least 60 people had died since Friday in fighting in black townships around Johannesburg and in the eastern province of Natal.

Most of the clashes set members of Buthelezi's Inkatha Freedom Party against those of Mandela's ANC.

Police said the total included 22 people killed in Soweto when pro-Inkatha mourners went on a murderous rampage during the funeral of an Inkatha mayor and 32 in another Johannesburg township, Alexandra. Scores of people were wounded.

De Klerk asked Mandela and Buthelezi to join him as soon as possible in talks to end the violence, ahead of a previously proposed peace summit in late May.

"If we stand arm in arm," he said, "we will be able to stem the tide of violence."

De Klerk said South Africa would sell some of its strategic oil reserves to raise money for social spending, including schools, clinics and homes for blacks.

De Klerk, who has promised to scrap all apartheid laws this year, proposed creation of an emergency aid fund to provide food, clothing and blankets for communities hit by violence.

The country's biggest labour federation, the Congress of South African Trade Unions (COSATU), threatened Monday to call a general strike if the government fails to heed the ANC's May 9 deadline.

The union's Central Committee, which met over the weekend, also called in a statement for members to arm themselves "in a disciplined way" to protect themselves from attack. The federation includes the mineworkers' union.

Over 100 killed in Bangladesh cyclone

DHAKA (R) — More than 100 people have been killed in the most powerful cyclone to hit Bangladesh in two decades and hundreds more are missing, feared drowned, officials said Tuesday.

"The death toll will definitely go up, maybe to hundreds or thousands," one government official said.

Prime Minister Begum Khaleda Zia flew to the area to try to assess the damage.

"She has desperately tried to get information from the area but failed because of disrupted telecommunications," said one official at the prime minister's office.

"She decided to rush herself to see the extent of damage and loss of lives."

The storm Monday night, with winds up to 145 miles per hour (233 kph), was the most severe in the 20-year history of Bangladesh, government officials said.

At least 117 people were killed and hundreds were missing along the coast and on offshore islands, they said.

The hurricane-force winds were stronger than a 1970 cyclone that killed 100,000 people, weather officials said.

First reports from the devastated areas said 500 or more people on 100 fishing boats were missing, feared drowned in the Bay of Bengal.

"We still don't have news from much of the devastated areas. We have our fingers crossed as much of the storm-hit area is out of contact," one official said.

In the highest-known death tolls on the islands, 12 deaths were reported from Nijhumdip island and 11 from Urirchar, which bore the brunt of a 1985 storm that killed at least 11,000 islanders.

The army, navy, air force, police, coastguards and fire fighters joined rescue efforts Tuesday afternoon.

"We cannot assess the need for assistance to the affected people without regular updates on the situation there," a Relief Ministry official said.

The storm swept over at least a dozen islands with up to 20-foot (six-metre) tidal waves and battered almost the entire coast.

The storm lost much of its strength Tuesday morning and turned into a land depression, meteorologists said.

At least 100 killed in Soviet Georgia quake

MOSCOW (AP) — Rescuers struggled Tuesday to dig out survivors from collapsed buildings and rock slides after an earthquake in Soviet Georgia left at least 100 people dead, levelling one village and trapping about 30 miners.

Tedo Badashvili, chairman of the Foreign Relations Committee of the Southern republic's legislature, said 1,000 people were injured in Monday's midday quake. The Soviet Red Cross reported 257 people hurt.

Badashvili said he feared the casualty toll would climb as rescuers discover more bodies and reports filter back from isolated communities virtually cut off from the outside world.

Rescue workers were not expected to arrive until late Tuesday at the Baril harium mine high in the Caucasus Mountains near the quake's epicentre, where the national labour newspaper Trud said 30 miners were trapped underground. It was not known whether they were still alive.

The earthquake struck at 12:13 p.m. (0913 GMT) in mountainous north-central Georgia among sparsely populated villages and towns and measured 7.1 on the Richter Scale. Its epicentre was near 3,562-metre Mount Samtskhe.

Aftershocks continued throughout the day Monday, and a Soviet television camera even captured one strong aftershock collapsing an already severely damaged building.

A regional police spokesman, Zurab Kadzhaya, said Tuesday

that a survey of the stricken region by helicopter found the village of Khakheti to be levelled, although the extent of casualties was unclear.

Eighty per cent of the buildings were damaged in Dzhava, a mountain town of 11,000 people near the quake's epicentre. Kadzhaya said by telephone from Kutaisi, a nearby city of 235,000.

He said about 75 per cent of the building were damaged in the towns of Ambrolauri, Oni and Sachkhere — all of which are within about 64 kilometres of Dzhava. Deputy Health Minister Merab Kvitsashvili said 80 per cent of buildings in the region were destroyed.

Both Badashvili and Kadzhaya put the death toll at 100.

"So far, we have only preliminary information, but it's alarming," Khujia Khundadze, press spokesman for the Georgian legislature, told Komsomolskaya Pravda newspaper.

In a report from Dzhava, Soviet Television showed several collapsed buildings and others with gaping holes. Rescuers standing atop a mound of rubble dug hurriedly with their hands to remove buge stones.

The independent Interfax News Agency said that among the buildings destroyed in Dzhava, were a kindergarten, a high school, a hospital and a printing house, in addition to 30 homes.

Dzhava is about 96 kilometres northwest of the Georgian capital of Tbilisi and about the same distance east of Kutaisi.

COLUMN

Prague's red tank painted pink

PRAGUE (R) — A Soviet tank which has dominated a Prague square since the 1950s was painted pink by an unknown prankster, the Czechoslovak News Agency (CTK) reported. The tank, on a three-metre stone pedestal, is identical to the first Soviet tank to reach Prague in May 1945 to liberate the city from Nazi occupation. The original was destroyed in battle. The names of its dead crew are inscribed on the pedestal. The mayor's office described the repainting of the tank from its wartime camouflage colours as an act of vandalism. "The tank will be veiled until the paint can be removed, to spare the public the view of the desecrated cultural memorial," CTK said. Local authorities last February announced plans to sell the tank by auction. Many Czechs, including President Vaclav Havel, protested and the auction was cancelled.

Woman loses compensation case

ADELAIDE, Australia (R) — An Australian woman who said a furry toy penis kept her work place by a colleague had caused her stress has lost her claim for sickness benefits. The administrative appeals tribunal Monday rejected the claim that the woman, whose name was not released, had been hurt psychologically by the toy which a female colleague kept in a plastic case on a filing cabinet. The tribunal upheld a decision by the Federal Workers' Compensation Scheme, CompCare, not to pay sickness benefits. The woman, who worked for the Federal Community Services and Health Department in Adelaide, said she and her husband, the office supervisor, were made physically and mentally ill by the toy when it appeared in February 1989. But the toy's owner said most people either laughed at the toy, a Christmas present, or asked what it was. Since leaving work in August 1989, the woman has received 14,500 Australian dollars (\$11,300) in rehabilitation expenses from CompCare, including counselling, gymnasium, membership and money for an interior decorating course.

Belgium claims record for longest train

BRUSSELS (AP) — the Belgian railway company claimed today it has set a new record for the world's longest train, running a 70-car train from Ghent to Ostend. The train was 1,773.95 metres long and traveled over a 61-kilometre route between the two cities. The previous record of a 60-car train had been held by the Dutch Railways, the Belgian Railway Company said. Three hundred people were aboard the train on a special charity trip to raise money to fight cancer.

Bank's error provides windfall for poor village

NEW YORK (AP) — An overlooked decimal point at a bank brought a windfall to schoolchildren of two impoverished Chinese villages. The Foreign Exchange Department of Morgan Guaranty Trust Co. sent \$10,000, instead of \$100, to the elementary school of Yeguao, China. For most of the children, a tiny fraction of the money is the difference between finishing school or dropping out. The school's annual fees are only \$13, but the per capita income in the central China hamlet is less than \$60 a year. Morgan Guaranty converted the accident into a \$9,900 benevolence, saying through spokesman John M. Morris: "Under the circumstances, we're happy to make a donation of the difference." The story began on Dec. 3 with an article in the New York Times describing the desperate effort of one girl, Dai Manju, 14, to become the first in her family to finish grade school. Lack of money had forced her to drop out four times. The Times reported Monday that 11 readers sent contributions ranging from \$13 to \$100 to help the child and her classmates. One of the donors was a Morgan Guaranty employee who wrote a check for \$100, said another bank spokesman, Richard Mahony. The decimal-point foulup occurred when the amount was translated to yuan, which are worth about 5.3 to the dollar. "It slipped through several controls and happened. It's just a fortunate occurrence for the school," Mahony said.

Army ousts Lesotho ruler in coup

MASERU, Lesotho (R) — The military ruler of the southern African kingdom of Lesotho, Major-General Justin Lekhanya, was ousted in a military coup Tuesday, diplomats said.

Radio Lesotho announced about 10 a.m. (0700 GMT) that Lekhanya, who himself seized power in a 1986 coup, and Colonel Michael Tsotetsi, a member of the six-man ruling military council, were under arrest.

Lekhanya went on the state-run radio about 15 minutes later to say in a shocked and quavering voice that he had resigned, diplomats said.

He was reported as saying there had been popular criticism of his leadership as well as criticism of some of his colleagues in the military government. For this reason, he said, he had stepped down.

The little mountain kingdom with a population of 1.6 million is

encircled by South Africa.

Diplomats contacted in the kingdom by phone said they had seen troops surrounding Lekhanya's home Tuesday morning and an armoured troop carrier patrolling the streets of the capital.

Nobody had yet claimed to have taken charge, they said.

"We're still waiting for developments," one diplomat said. "Certainly it's something that has happened in the army."

Kaifu to push efforts for Cambodia peace in Bangkok

BANGKOK (R) — Prime Minister Toshiaki Kaifu arrived in Bangkok Tuesday seeking to promote Japan's role in efforts to end the Cambodian conflict.

The 12-year-old war, stalemated on the battlefield and at the negotiating table, will be high on the agenda of his talks with Thailand's caretaker prime minister, Anand Panyarachun, Japanese diplomatic sources said.

Kaifu will also meet Khmer Rouge chief Khieu Samphan and the leaders of the two other guerrilla groups allied against the Phnom Penh government Wednesday, the sources said.

Anand was at Bangkok Airport along with heads of the Thai army, navy and air force to greet Kaifu when his plane arrived from Brunei.

Thailand was to have been the last leg of Kaifu's South East Asian trip, originally planned for January, and the venue for an important keynote speech on Japan's policy towards the Communist and non-Communist blocs in the region.

But Bangkok lost the diplomatic limelight when the itinerary was changed following the Feb. 23 military coup here. The speech will now be given in Singapore.

The coup has however opened the door wider for Japan's diplomatic aspirations towards Cambodia.

Thailand had previously been in the forefront of the peace process, but the coup ended the special relationship between

Phnom Penh and the government of former Premier Chhatichai Chohnhavan.

Japan was now prepared to assume that role, the diplomatic sources said. Tokyo believed it was now in a unique position to push forward a United Nations-sponsored peace effort because it had good contacts with all sides.

"We can talk to all of them," said one Japanese source.

Although Japan still recognises the guerrilla coalition, it has improved its relationship with Phnom Penh, Cambodian Prime Minister Hun Sen was in Tokyo last week for medical treatment and met Japanese officials.

Japan wanted to see an end to the war it viewed as Asia's most intractable and destabilising conflict, diplomats said.

"We are not overly optimistic about Cambodia. It will not be solved overnight. It is a complicated issue," said one.

At the same time Cambodia provides a stage on which Japan can assert a role in international diplomacy to match its economic might — a delicate issue because of Asian memories of Japanese militarism in World War II.

Japan is expected to make a hefty financial contribution to the reconstruction of a post-war Cambodia.

Unlike in the Gulf crisis, where it picked up a big part of the bill but had little input politically, Japan wanted some say in the Cambodian settlement, the sources said.

Document promotes top Aquino aide as successor

MANILA (AP) — An elaborate publicity campaign has been launched to promote President Corason Aquino's chief aide as savior of the nation and get him elected her successor, according to a presidential document.

The strategy paper prepared by the presidential staff outlines a three-phase campaign to promote the image of Executive Secretary Oscar Orbes and "create a compelling communications climate" to ensure his election in May 1992.

The document entitled "integrated communications programme for Oscar Orbes," was obtained by the Associated Press Tuesday.

In a statement issued by his staff, Orbes said he was unaware of the document.

"We are for good public service," the statement said. "One has to learn to live with these things in the world of political intrigue."

According to the document, an unofficial campaign was begun this month to portray the 40-year-

old executive secretary as a youthful, vigorous alternative to other aspirants.

Orbes, a former congressman and transport secretary, was appointed executive secretary last January. Since then, he has become the most visible official on the presidential staff, appearing often before reporters and on radio and television shows.

Orbes also has been behind numerous public service campaigns that critics have denounced as gimmicks and publicity stunts. These include free telephone calls for families of those working in the Gulf, discount sale of fish and vegetables and even free circumcision at the Palace Health Clinic.

According to the document, the first phase of the Orbes promotion will end next January when Mrs. Aquino is expected to endorse him as her successor.

Mrs. Aquino, who took office in 1986 after a popular uprising toppled the late President Ferdinand Marcos, has ruled out a second term.

Pakistani bandits free two kidnapped Japanese

KARACHI (R) — Pakistani bandits released two Japanese students from 44 days of captivity Tuesday unharmed and with no ransom, Pakistani police and the Japanese embassy said.

Takayasu Hattori, 20, and Takuya Sato, 19, of Tokyo's Waseda University were freed in the southern Pakistani province of Sind at 6:00 a.m. (0100 GMT), the police said.

"They are unharmed but under immense mental fatigue," a police official in the provincial capital Karachi said.

"The two Japanese have been rescued after a normal action," he said. Details would be provided later, he said. The exact location of their release was not disclosed.

"No money was involved," a Japanese embassy spokesman in Islamabad said.

The students were released "in a river bed" and would eventually be brought to Islamabad, the spokesman, citing information from Pakistani authorities, said.

The two Japanese, along with a third student and a Pakistani guide, were kidnapped on March 17 while rafting on the Indus River on an expedition to study the river and the behaviour of the blind dolphin that live there.

The bandits overpowered the team in the middle of the river and took away the boat.

The third student, Yoshihiro Tachikawa, was released on March 23 with a note of ransom for the Japanese embassy. The guide, Ghulam Ahmad, 38, was freed on April 14.

The two others were kept on the move in forests along the river.

Local press reports said the bandits had demanded 40 million rupees (\$1.7 million) in ransom and release of jailed colleagues.

Police did not confirm the reports. "We will not accept any conditions of the criminals. We will not swap anyone with them (the Japanese)," Sind Chief Minister Jam Sadiq Ali said Saturday.

The kidnapping added to pressure on Ali to combat widespread crime in his province, which he vowed to fight after taking office last August.

Army commandos and police searched forests, but authorities said violent action was avoided for the safety of the students.

A kidnapped Swedish engineer, Peter Schnbert, 40, was killed on April 10 in a gunfight between police and bandits in Sind.

Salvadorean legislature approves constitutional reforms

SAN SALVADOR (AP) — The outgoing legislature has approved constitutional reforms considered crucial to a prompt end to the nation's 11-year-old civil war.

The reforms, most of which emerged from government-guerrilla peace talks, affect the armed forces, the judiciary and the electoral system.

The 60-member General Assembly, the unicameral legislature, said the reforms demonstrated "its firm objective and duty to quickly advance towards establishment of peace, national reconciliation and the reunification of Salvadoran society."

The reforms were approved by unanimous show of hands. Fifty-seven legislators were present for the nighttime session.

Constitutional reform has been a principal item on the agenda of year-old U.N.-mediated peace talks between the rightist government of President Alfredo Cristiani and leftist rebels of the Farabundo Marti National Liberation Front.

The reforms approved by the legislature were based — in most cases word-for-word — on a document produced during three weeks of intense peace negotiations earlier this month in Mexico City. That accord was made public Saturday night.

The peace negotiators and legislators were face an April 30 deadline for drafting and approving constitutional reforms.

The new assembly is expected to promptly ratify the reforms.

Emergency appeal launched to help 27 million starving in Africa

LONDON (AP) — Princess Anne has launched an emergency appeal to help millions of people facing imminent starvation in seven African nations — a famine that far exceeds the worst ever seen on the continent.

"While the Western world has been preoccupied with events in Eastern Europe and the Gulf, a crisis has been developing in Africa on an unprecedented scale," the princess said at a news conference sponsored by the aid agency Save the Children.

Despite warnings of famine from international organisations 'last fall,' "The international response has been too little, too late. Only a fraction of the food aid needed... has been delivered. Even less has been delivered," she said.

The World Bank estimates 27 million people face starvation and hunger.

The familiar cycle of drought, crop failure, mass migration, civil war and corrupt governments are hardest on Africa's young.

A report by Save the Children said nearly half of those who will die of starvation in Sudan, Ethiopia, Liberia, Angola, Somalia, Mozambique and Malawi are infants and children.

Many people have only enough food to last only another two weeks. Men, women and children already are dying each day in the

hot, dusty villages of Sudan, many too weak to crawl to feeding centres.

Britain's Minister for Overseas Development Lynda Chalker said Monday that Britain began stockpiling food for African relief last fall, and has been sending tonnes of aid each month. But other nations have been slower to act, and she accused the United States of dragging its feet.

"One of the difficulties... has been with some of the other donors, people who donate much more grain than we do, such as the United States, have indeed been much slower in coming forward," she said in an interview on British Broadcasting Corp. (BBC) radio.

The World Food Programme in Rome estimated earlier this year that 4 million tonnes of food would be needed for all of Africa. By mid-March, only 1.7 million tonnes had been pledged, according to a Save the Children report released Monday.

The United Nations in December asked for 1.2 million tonnes of food for the Sudan of which 72,104 tonnes had been delivered by mid-March, the report said.

The report said about one-fifth of all the food required had been delivered.

"Dignors like America are offering a fraction of what they normally do, and if we do not get

those pledges soon it will be too late," said Toney Fawkes, emergencies officer for Oxfam.

Several aid agencies said the United States was particularly reluctant to provide aid to Sudan, which sympathised with Iraq during the Gulf war.

Children in Sudan now are dying from malnutrition, the Save the Children report said. As many as 2 million people in Ethiopia have received no food for more than six weeks, it said.

In Angola, 30 per cent of the children under six years of age are suffering severe malnutrition, the report said.

In the Liberian capital of Monrovia, 10,000 children are orphaned or separated from their parents as a result of a year of civil war. It is feared that one in seven of them will die from disease and malnutrition before the end of the year, the report said.

"The situation is certainly the worst I've ever seen it, and I've been working in this region for about 10 years," said Ben Foot, regional director for Save the Children in Africa. "People who have been working here much longer say the same thing."

He said 10 million people face famine in the Sudan and about 5 million more in Ethiopia. By comparison, a million people in Ethiopia and about the same



Princess Anne today

number in the Sudan faced famine in 1984-1985.

"Basically, I'm surrounded by the spectre of thousands and thousands of children dying on us in the next month or two," Foot said in a telephone interview on BBC radio.

He asked donors to send food and money immediately.

"Donors are not coming up with what we are requesting," he said.

Princess Anne, president of Save the Children, said the organisation needs £2.5 million (\$4.2 million) for providing food and transport, health programmes, nutrition and supplementary feeding programmes, water programmes and shelter, she said.

She asked people to skip one lunch and donate the money saved to the relief campaign.

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